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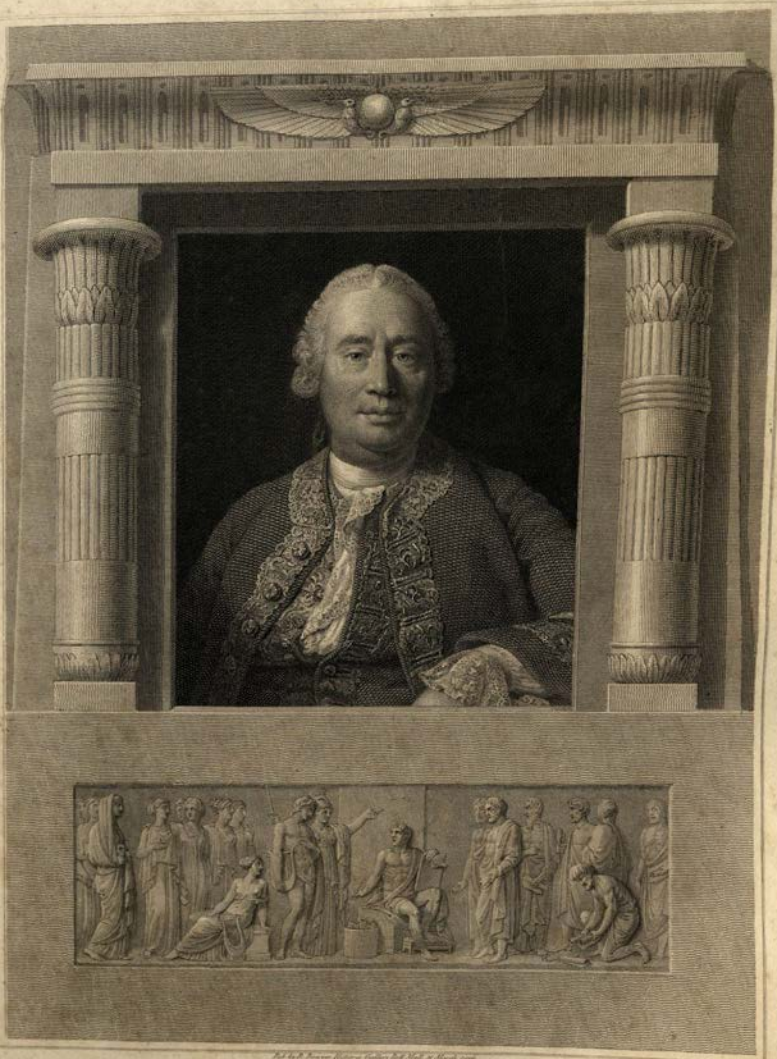

DAVID HUME.

THE

HISTORY

OF

England,

FROM THE

INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR

TO THE

REVOLUTION IN 1688,

BY

David Hume.

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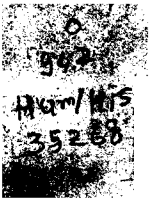

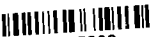
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H. Fuseli, R.A. del. F. Bartolozzi R.A. sculp.

To the KING'S most

EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

SIRE

A Work like the present could not have even been projected under any other than your MAJESTY'S Reign, during which those elegant Arts, that are here employed to adorn and impress the glory of England in laws & arms, have been more successfully cultivated in your MAJESTY'S Dominions, than during any former period of the British Annals. — Deign, therefore, to accept a tribute so peculiarly your own, that to no one else, it could with any propriety be offered. — At the name of a PRINCE under whose auspices English Painting first asserted its rank in the Schools of Europe, those painful Anxieties evanish, which might otherwise intimidate the courage, and weaken the exertions, essentially requisite in great Undertakings.

I have the honour to be

May it please Your Majesty

Your Majesty's

most obliged and devoted Servant

Robert Bowyer

London

Historic Gallery Pall Mall

Tomkins fec. — Vincent sp.

H. Tresham A. del. — Publ. April 1790 — J. Walker sculp.

TO THE

LEGISLATURE

OF

Great Britain

The PROPOSER of a Work destined for the purpose of enforcing the important Lessons of English History by the assistance of the FINE ARTS must be ambitious of deserving in his hazardous Undertaking the peculiar protection of the British Legislature, to which the complete Series of Historic Pictures, being the Originals for Prints illustrating this Work, will be respectfully presented with a view to ornament its Chambers of Assembly, to form a School of Historic Painting, or to answer any other national purpose that may to the Wisdom of Parliament seem fit.

Robt. Bowyer.

Historic Gallery
Pallmall

Printed for Alexander Fox.

THE

LIFE

OF

DAVID HUME, ESQ.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

MY OWN LIFE.

It is difficult for a man to speak long of himself without vanity, therefore I shall be short. It may be thought an instance of vanity that I pretend at all to write my life; but this narrative shall contain little more than the history of my writings, as indeed almost all my life has been spent in literary pursuits and occupations. The first success of most of my writings was not such as to be an object of vanity.

I was born the twenty-sixth of April 1711, old style, at Edinburgh. I was of a good family, both by father and mother. My father's family is a branch of the earl of Home's, or Hume's; and my ancestors had been proprietors of the estate which my brother possesses for several generations. My mother was daughter of sir David Falconer, president of the college of justice: the title of lord Halkerton came by succession to her brother.

My family, however, was not rich; and, being myself a younger brother, my patrimony, according to the mode of my country, was of course very slender. My father, who passed for a man of parts, died when I was an infant, leaving me with an elder brother and a sister, under the care of our mother, a woman of singular merit, who, though young and handsome, devoted herself entirely to the rearing and educating of her children. I passed through the ordinary course of education with success, and was seized very early with a passion for literature, which had been the ruling passion of my life, and the great source of my enjoyments. My studious disposition, my sobriety, and my industry, gave my family a notion that the law was a proper profession for me; but I found an unsurmountable aversion to every thing but the pursuits of philosophy and general learning: and, while they fancied I was poring upon Voet and Vinnius, Cicero and Virgil were the authors which I was secretly devouring.

My very slender fortune, however, being unsuitable to this plan of life, and my health being a little broken by my ardent application, I was tempted, or rather forced, to make a very feeble trial for entering into a more active scene of life. In 1734 I went to Bristol, with some recommendations to eminent merchants; but in a few months found that scene totally unsuitable to me. I went over to France with a view of prosecuting my studies in a country retreat; and I there laid that plan of life which I have steadily and

successfully pursued. I resolved to make a very rigid frugality supply my deficiency of fortune, to maintain unimpaired my independency, and to regard every object as contemptible except the improvement of my talents in literature.

During my retreat in France, first at Rheims, but chiefly at La Fleche, in Anjou, I composed my 'Treatise of Human Nature.' After passing three years very agreeably in that country, I came over to London in 1737. In the end of 1738 I published my treatise, and immediately went down to my mother and my brother, who lived at his country house, and was employing himself very judiciously and successfully in the improvement of his fortune.

Never literary attempt was more unfortunate than my Treatise of Human Nature. It fell dead-born from the press, without reaching such distinction as even to excite a murmur among the zealots. But, being naturally of a cheerful and sanguine temper, I very soon recovered the blow, and prosecuted with great ardour my studies in the country. In 1742 I printed at Edinburgh the first part of my Essays: the work was favourably received, and soon made me entirely forget my former disappointment. I continued with my mother and brother in the country, and in that time recovered the knowledge of the Greek language, which I had too much neglected in my early youth.

In 1745 I received a letter from the marquis of Annandale, inviting me to come and live with him in England; I found also that the friends and family of that young nobleman were desirous of putting him under my care and direction, for the state of his mind and health required it. I lived with him a twelvemonth. My appointments during that time made a considerable accession to my small fortune. I then received an invitation from general St. Clair to attend him as a secretary to his expedition, which was at first meant against Canada, but ended in an incursion on the coast of France. Next year, to wit 1747, I received an invitation from the general to attend him in the same station in his military embassy to the courts of Vienna and Turin. I then wore the uniform of an officer, and was introduced at these courts as aid-de-camp to the general, along with sir Harry Erskine and captain Grant, now general Grant. These two years were almost the only interruptions which my studies have received during the course of my life: I passed them agreeably, and in good company; and my appointments, with my frugality, had made me reach a fortune which I called independent, though most of my friends were inclined to smile when I said so: in short, I was now master of near a thousand pounds.

I had always entertained a notion that my want of success in publishing the Treatise of Human Nature had proceeded more from the manner than the matter, and that I had been guilty of a very usual indiscretion, in going to the press too early. I therefore cast the first part of that work anew in

the 'Enquiry concerning Human Understanding,' which was published while I was at Turin. But this piece was at first little more successful than the Treatise of Human Nature. On my return from Italy I had the mortification to find all England in a ferment, on account of Dr. Middleton's 'Free Enquiry,' while my performance was entirely overlooked and neglected. A new edition, which had been published at London, of my Essays, moral and political, met not with a much better reception.

Such is the force of natural temper, that these disappointments made little or no impression on me. I went down in 1749, and lived two years with my brother at his country house, for my mother was now dead. I there composed the second part of my essay, which I called 'Political Discourses,' and also my 'Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals,' which is another part of my treatise that I cast anew. Meanwhile my bookseller, A. Millar, informed me that my former publications (all but the unfortunate treatise) were beginning to be the subject of conversation; that the sale of them was gradually increasing, and that new editions were demanded. Answers by reverends and right reverends came out two or three in a year; and I found, by Dr. Warburton's railing, that the books were beginning to be esteemed in good company. However, I had a fixed resolution, which I inflexibly maintained, never to reply to any body; and, not being very irascible in my temper, I have easily kept myself clear of all literary squabbles. These symptoms of a rising reputation gave me encouragement, as I was ever more disposed to see the favourable than unfavourable side of things; a turn of mind which it is more happy to possess than to be born to an estate of ten thousand a year.

In 1751 I removed from the country to the town, the true scene for a man of letters. In 1752 were published at Edinburgh, where I then lived, my 'Political Discourses,' the only work of mine that was successful on the first publication. It was well received abroad and at home. In the same year was published at London my 'Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals;' which, in my own opinion (who ought not to judge on that subject), is of all my writings, historical, philosophical, or literary, incomparably the best. It came unnoticed and unobserved into the world.

In 1752 the Faculty of Advocates chose me their librarian; an office from which I received little or no emolument, but which gave me the command of a large library. I then formed the plan of writing the 'History of England;' but, being frightened with the notion of continuing a narrative through a period of seventeen hundred years, I commenced with the accession of the house of Stuart, an epoch when I thought the misrepresentations of faction began chiefly to take place. I was, I own, sanguine in my expectations of the success of this work. I thought that I was the only historian that had at once neglected present power, interest, and authority, and the cry of

popular prejudices; and, as the subject was suited to every capacity, I expected proportional applause. But miserable was my disappointment: I was assailed by one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation: English, Scotch, and Irish, whig and tory, churchman and sectary, freethinker and religionist, patriot and courtier, united in their rage against the man who had presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles I and the earl of Strafford; and, after the first ebullitions of their fury were over, what was still more mortifying, the book seemed to sink into oblivion. Mr. Millar told me that in a twelvemonth he sold only forty-five copies of it. I scarcely, indeed, heard of one man in the three kingdoms, considerable for rank or letters, that could endure the book. I must only except the primate of England, Dr. Herring, and the primate of Ireland, Dr. Stone, which seem two odd exceptions. These dignified prelates separately sent me messages not to be discouraged.

I was, however, I confess, discouraged; and, had not the war at that time been breaking out between France and England, I had certainly retired to some provincial town of the former kingdom, have changed my name, and never more have returned to my native country: but, as this scheme was not now practicable, and the subsequent volume was considerably advanced, I resolved to pick up courage and to persevere.

In this interval I published at London my 'Natural History of Religion' along with some other small pieces: its public entry was rather obscure, except only that Dr. Hurd wrote a pamphlet against it, with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance, and scurrility, which distinguish the Warburtonian school. This pamphlet gave me some consolation for the otherwise indifferent reception of my performance.

In 1756, two years after the fall of the first volume, was published the second volume of my 'History, containing the period from the death of Charles I till the Revolution.' This performance happened to give less displeasure to the Whigs, and was better received. It not only rose itself, but helped to buoy up its unfortunate brother.

But, though I had been taught by experience that the Whig party were in possession of bestowing all places, both in the state and in literature, I was so little inclined to yield to their senseless clamour, that in above a hundred alterations, which farther study, reading, or recollection, engaged me to make in the reigns of the two first Stuarts, I have made all of them invariably to the Tory side. It is ridiculous to consider the English constitution before that period as a regular plan of liberty.

In 1759 I published my History of the House of Tudor. The clamour against this performance was almost equal to that against the History of the two first Stuarts. The reign of Elizabeth was particularly obnoxious. But I was now callous against the impressions of public folly, and continued

very peaceably and contentedly in my retreat at Edinburgh to finish, in two volumes, the more early part of 'The English History,' which I gave to the public in 1761, with tolerable, and but tolerable, success.

But, notwithstanding this variety of winds and seasons to which my writings had been exposed, they had still been making such advances, that the copy-money given me by the booksellers much exceeded any thing formerly known in England; I was become not only independent, but opulent. I retired to my native country of Scotland, determined never more to set my foot out of it; and retaining the satisfaction of never having preferred a request to one great man, or even making advances of friendship to any of them. As I was now turned of fifty, I thought of passing all the rest of my life in this philosophical manner, when I received, in 1763, an invitation from the earl of Hertford, with whom I was not in the least acquainted, to attend him on his embassy to Paris, with a near prospect of being appointed secretary to the embassy, and in the meanwhile of performing the functions of that office. This offer, however inviting, I at first declined, both because I was reluctant to begin connexions with the great, and because I was afraid that the civilities and gay company of Paris would prove disagreeable to a person of my age and humour; but, on his lordship's repeating the invitation, I accepted of it. I have every reason, both of pleasure and interest, to think myself happy in my connexions with that nobleman, as well as afterwards with his brother general Conway.

Those who have not seen the strange effects of modes will never imagine the reception I met with at Paris, from men and women of all ranks and stations. The more I resiled from their excessive civilities, the more I was loaded with them. There is, however, a real satisfaction in living at Paris, from the great number of sensible, knowing, and polite, company with which that city abounds above all places in the universe. I thought once of settling there for life.

I was appointed secretary to the embassy; and in summer 1765 lord Hertford left me, being appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland. I was chargé d'affaires till the arrival of the duke of Richmond, towards the end of the year. In the beginning of 1766 I left Paris, and next summer went to Edinburgh, with the same view as formerly, of burying myself in a philosophical retreat. I returned to that place not richer, but with much more money, and a much larger income, by means of lord Hertford's friendship, than I left it; and I was desirous of trying what superfluity could produce, as I had formerly made an experiment of a competency. But in 1767 I received from Mr. Conway an invitation to be under secretary; and this invitation both the character of the person, and my connexions with lord Hertford, prevented me from declining. I returned to Edinburgh in 1769 very opulent (for I possessed a revenue of one thousand pounds a year),

healthy, and, though somewhat stricken in years, with the prospect of enjoying long my ease, and of seeing the increase of my reputation.

In spring 1775 I was struck with a disorder in my bowels, which at first gave me no alarm, but has since, as I apprehend it, become mortal and incurable. I now reckon upon a speedy dissolution. I have suffered very little pain from my disorder; and, what is more strange, have, notwithstanding the great decline of my person, never suffered a moment's abatement of my spirits; insomuch that, were I to name a period of my life which I should most choose to pass over again, I might be tempted to point to this later period. I possess the same ardour as ever in study, and the same gaiety in company. I consider, besides, that a man of sixty-five, by dying, cuts off only a few years of infirmities; and, though I see many symptoms of my literary reputation's breaking out at last with additional lustre, I know that I could have but few years to enjoy it. It is difficult to be more detached from life than I am at present.

To conclude historically with my own character. I am, or rather was (for that is the style I must now use in speaking of myself, which emboldens me the more to speak my sentiments); I was, I say, a man of mild disposition, of command of temper, of an open, social, and cheerful humour, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling passion, never soured my temper, notwithstanding my frequent disappointments. My company was not unacceptable to the young and careless, as well as to the studious and literary; and, as I took a particular pleasure in the company of modest women, I had no reason to be displeased with the reception I met with from them. In a word, though most men, anywise eminent, have found reason to complain of calumny, I never was touched, or even attacked, by her baleful tooth; and, though I wantonly exposed myself to the rage of both civil and religious factions, they seemed to be disarmed in my behalf of their wonted fury. My friends never had occasion to vindicate any one circumstance of my character and conduct: not but that the zealots, we may well suppose, would have been glad to invent and propagate any story to my disadvantage, but they could never find any which they thought would wear the face of probability. I cannot say there is no vanity in making this funeral oration of myself; but I hope it is not a misplaced one; and this is a matter of fact which is easily cleared and ascertained.

April 18, 1776.

LETTER

FROM

ADAM SMITH, LL.D.

TO

WILLIAM STRAHAN, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

Kirkaldy, Fifeshire, Nov. 9, 1776.

It is with a real, though a very melancholy, pleasure that I sit down to give you some account of the behaviour of our late excellent friend, Mr. Hume, during his last illness.

Though in his own judgment his disease was mortal and incurable, yet he allowed himself to be prevailed upon, by the entreaty of his friends, to try what might be the effects of a long journey. A few days before he set out he wrote that account of his own life which, together with his other papers, he has left to your care. My account, therefore, shall begin where his ends.

He set out for London towards the end of April, and at Morpeth met with Mr. John Home and myself, who had both come down from London on purpose to see him, expecting to have found him at Edinburgh. Mr. Home returned with him, and attended him, during the whole of his stay in England, with that care and attention which might be expected from a temper so perfectly friendly and affectionate. As I had written to my mother that she might expect me in Scotland, I was under the necessity of continuing my journey. His disease seemed to yield to exercise and change of air; and, when he arrived in London, he was apparently in much better health than when he left Edinburgh. He was advised to go to Bath to drink

the waters, which appeared for some time to have so good an effect upon him, that even he himself began to entertain, what he was not apt to do, a better opinion of his own health. His symptoms, however, soon returned with their usual violence, and from that moment he gave up all thoughts of recovery, but submitted with the utmost cheerfulness, and the most perfect complacency and resignation. Upon his return to Edinburgh, though he found himself much weaker, yet his cheerfulness never abated, and he continued to divert himself, as usual, with correcting his own works for a new edition, with reading books of amusement, with the conversation of his friends; and sometimes in the evening with a party at his favourite game of whist. His cheerfulness was so great, and his conversation and amusements run so much in their usual strain, that, notwithstanding all bad symptoms, many people could not believe he was dying. 'I shall tell your friend, colonel Edmondstone,' said Dr. Dundas to him one day, 'that I left you much better, and in a fair way of recovery.' 'Doctor,' said he, 'as I believe you would not choose to tell any thing but the truth, you had better tell him that I am dying as fast as my enemies, if I have any, could wish, and as easily and cheerfully as my best friends could desire.' Colonel Edmondstone soon afterwards came to see him, and take leave of him; and on his way home he could not forbear writing him a letter, bidding him once more an eternal adieu, and applying to him, as to a dying man, the beautiful French verses in which the abbé Chaulieu, in expectation of his own death, laments his approaching separation from his friend the marquis de la Fare. Mr. Hume's magnanimity and firmness were such, that his most affectionate friends knew that they hazarded nothing in talking or writing to him as to a dying man; and that, so far from being hurt by this frankness, he was rather pleased and flattered by it. I happened to come into his room while he was reading this letter, which he had just received, and which he immediately shewed me. I told him that, though I was sensible how very much he was weakened, and that appearances were in many respects very bad, yet his cheerfulness was still so great, the spirit of life seemed still to be so very strong in him, that I could not help entertaining some faint hopes. He answered, 'Your hopes are groundless. An habitual diarrhœa of more than a year's standing would be a very bad disease at any age; at my age it is a mortal one. When I lie down in the evening I feel myself weaker than when I rose in the morning; and when I rise in the morning weaker than when I lay down in the evening. I am sensible, besides, that some of my vital parts are affected, so that I must soon die.' 'Well,' said I, 'if it must be so, you have at least the satisfaction of leaving all your friends, your brother's family in particular, in great prosperity.' He said that he felt that satisfaction so sensibly, that when he was reading, a few days before, Lucian's Dialogues of the Dead, among all the excuses which are alleged to

Charon for not entering readily into his boat, he could not find one that fitted him; he had no house to finish, he had no daughter to provide for, he had no enemies upon whom he wished to revenge himself. 'I could not well imagine,' said he, 'what excuse I could make to Charon in order to obtain a little delay. I have done every thing of consequence which I ever meant to do, and I could at no time expect to leave my relations and friends in a better situation than that in which I am now likely to leave them: I therefore have all reason to die contented.' He then diverted himself with inventing several jocular excuses which he supposed he might make to Charon, and with imagining the very surly answers which it might suit the character of Charon to return to them. 'Upon farther consideration,' said he, 'I thought I might say to him, "Good Charon, I have been correcting my works for a new edition. Allow me a little time, that I may see how the public receives the alterations." But Charon would answer, "When you have seen the effect of these you will be for making other alterations. There will be no end of such excuses; so, honest friend, please step into the boat." But I might still urge, "Have a little patience, good Charon, I have been endeavouring to open the eyes of the public. If I live a few years longer I may have the satisfaction of seeing the downfall of some of the prevailing systems of superstition." But Charon would then lose all temper and decency. "You loitering rogue, that will not happen these many hundred years. Do you fancy I will grant you a lease for so long a term? Get into the boat this instant, you lazy loitering rogue."

But, though Mr. Hume always talked of his approaching dissolution with great cheerfulness, he never affected to make any parade of his magnanimity. He never mentioned the subject but when the conversation naturally led to it, and never dwelt longer upon it than the course of the conversation happened to require: it was a subject, indeed, which occurred pretty frequently, in consequence of the inquiries which his friends, who came to see him, naturally made concerning the state of his health. The conversation which I mentioned above, and which passed on Thursday the eighth of August, was the last, except one, that I ever had with him. He had now become so very weak that the company of his most intimate friends fatigued him; for his cheerfulness was still so great, his complaisance and social disposition were still so entire, that when any friend was with him he could not help talking more, and with greater exertion, than suited the weakness of his body. At his own desire, therefore, I agreed to leave Edinburgh, where I was staying partly upon his account, and returned to my mother's house here at Kirkaldy, upon condition that he would send for me whenever he wished to see me; the physician who saw him most frequently, Dr. Black, undertaking, in the mean time, to write me occasionally an account of the state of his health.

On the twenty-second of August the doctor wrote me the following letter:

'SINCE my last Mr. Hume has passed his time pretty easily, but is much weaker. He sits up, goes down stairs once a day, and amuses himself with reading, but seldom sees any body. He finds that even the conversation of his most intimate friends fatigues and oppresses him; and it is happy that he does not need it, for he is quite free from anxiety, impatience, or low spirits, and passes his time very well with the assistance of amusing books.'

I received the day after a letter from Mr. Hume himself, of which the following is an extract:

'MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Edinburgh, Aug. 23, 1776.

'I AM obliged to make use of my nephew's hand in writing to you, as I do not rise to-day. *

'I go very fast to decline, and last night had a small fever, which I hoped might put a quicker period to this tedious illness; but unluckily it has in a great measure gone off. I cannot submit to your coming over here on my account, as it is possible for me to see you so small a part of the day; but Dr. Black can better inform you concerning the degree of strength which may from time to time remain with me. Adieu, &c.'

Three days after I received the following letter from Dr. Black:

'DEAR SIR,

Edinburgh, Monday, Aug. 26, 1776.

'YESTERDAY, about four o'clock afternoon, Mr. Hume expired. The near approach of his death became evident in the night between Thursday and Friday, when his disease became excessive, and soon weakened him so much, that he could no longer rise out of his bed. He continued to the last perfectly sensible, and free from much pain or feelings of distress. He never dropped the smallest expression of impatience; but, when he had occasion to speak to the people about him, always did it with affection and tenderness. I thought it improper to write to bring you over, especially as I heard that he had dictated a letter to you, desiring you not to come. When he became very weak it cost him an effort to speak, and he died in such a happy composure of mind that nothing could exceed it.'

Thus died our most excellent, and never to be forgotten, friend; concerning whose philosophical opinions men will no doubt judge variously, every one approving or condemning them according as they happen to coincide or disagree with his own; but concerning whose character and conduct there can scarce be a difference of opinion. His temper, indeed, seemed to be more happily balanced, if I may be allowed such an expression, than that perhaps of any other man I have ever known. Even in the lowest state of his fortune his great and necessary frugality never hindered him from exercising, upon proper occasions, acts both of charity and generosity. It was a frugality founded not upon avarice, but upon the love of independency. The extreme gentleness of his nature never weakened either the firmness of his mind, or the steadiness of his resolutions. His constant pleasantry was the genuine effusion of good nature and good humour, tempered with delicacy and modesty, and without even the slightest tincture of malignity, so frequently the disagreeable source of what is called wit in other men. It never was the meaning of his raillery to mortify; and therefore, far from offending, it seldom failed to please and delight, even those who were the objects of it. To his friends, who were frequently the objects of it, there was not perhaps any one of all his great and amiable qualities which contributed more to endear his conversation. And that gaiety of temper, so agreeable in society, but which is so often accompanied with frivolous and superficial qualities, was in him certainly attended with the most severe application, the most extensive learning, the greatest depth of thought, and a capacity in every respect the most comprehensive. Upon the whole, I have always considered him, both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit.

I ever am, dear Sir,

most affectionately yours,

ADAM SMITH.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND,

FROM

THE INVASION OF JULIUS CÆSAR

TO

THE REVOLUTION IN 1688.

BY DAVID HUME, ESQ.

THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

THE BRITONS.... ROMANS.... SAXONS..... THE HEPTARCHY..... THE KINGDOM OF KENT....OF NORTHUMBERLAND....OF EAST ANGLIA ....OF MERCIA....OF ESSEX....OF SUSSEX....OF WESSEX.

THE BRITONS.

THE curioſity, entertained by all civilized nations, of inquiring into the exploits and adventures of their anceſtors, commonly excites a regret that the hiſtory of remote ages ſhould always be ſo much involved in obſcurity, uncertainty, and contradiction. Ingenious men, poſſeſſed of leiſure, are apt to puſh their reſearches beyond the period in which literary monuments are framed or preſerved; without reflecting that the hiſtory of paſt events is immediately loſt or disfigured when intruſted to memory and oral tradition, and that the adventures of barbarous nations, even if they were recorded, could afford little or no entertainment to men born in a more cultivated age. The convulſions of a civilized ſtate uſually compoſe the moſt inſtructive

and moſt intereſting part of its hiſtory: but the ſudden, violent, and unprepared revolutions, incident to barbarians, are ſo much guided by caprice, and terminate ſo often in cruelty, that they diſguſt us by the uniformity of their appearance; and it is rather fortunate for letters that they are buried in ſilence and oblivion. The only certain means, by which nations can indulge their curioſity in reſearches concerning their remote origin, is to conſider the language, manners, and cuſtoms, of their anceſtors, and to compare them with thoſe of the neighbouring nations. The fables, which are commonly employed to ſupply the place of true hiſtory, ought entirely to be diſregarded; or, if any exception be admitted to this general rule, it can only be in favour of the ancient Grecian fictions, which are ſo celebrated, and ſo agreeable, that they will ever be the objects of the attention of mankind. Neglecting, therefore, all traditions, or rather tales, concerning the more early hiſtory of Britain, we ſhall only conſider the ſtate of the inhabitants as it appeared to the Romans on their invaſion of this country: we ſhall briefly run over the events which attended the conqueſt made by that empire, as belonging more to Roman than Britiſh ſtory: we ſhall haſten through the obſcure and unintereſting period of Saxon annals; and ſhall reſerve a more full narration for thoſe times when the truth is both ſo well aſcertained and ſo complete as to promiſe entertainment and inſtruction to the reader.

All ancient writers agree in repreſenting the firſt inhabitants of Britain as a tribe of the Gauls or Celtæ, who peopled that iſland from the neighbouring continent. Their language was the ſame, their manners, their government, their ſuperſtition; varied only by thoſe ſmall differences which time, or a communication with the bordering nations, muſt neceſſarily introduce. The inhabitants of Gaul, eſpecially in thoſe parts which lie contiguous to Italy, had acquired, from a commerce with their ſouthern

neighbours, ſome refinement in the arts, which gradually diffuſed themſelves northwards, and ſpread but a very faint light over this iſland. The Greek and Roman navigators or merchants (for there were ſcarcely any other travellers in thoſe ages) brought back the moſt ſhocking accounts of the ferocity of the people; which they magnified, as uſual, in order to excite the admiration of their countrymen. The ſouth-eaſt parts, however, of Britain had already, before the age of Cæſar, made the firſt and moſt requiſite ſtep towards a civil ſettlement; and the Britons, by tillage and agriculture, had there increaſed to a great multitude.[a] The other inhabitants of the iſland ſtill maintained themſelves by paſture; they were clothed with ſkins of beaſts; they dwelt in huts, which they reared in the foreſts and marſhes, with which the country was covered; they ſhifted eaſily their habitation, when actuated either by the hopes of plunder or the fear of an enemy; the convenience of feeding their cattle was even a ſufficient motive for removing their ſeats; and, as they were ignorant of all the refinements of life, their wants and their poſſeſſions were equally ſcanty and limited.

The Britons were divided into many ſmall nations or tribes; and, being a military people, whoſe ſole property was their arms and their cattle, it was impoſſible, after they had acquired a reliſh of liberty, for their princes or chieftains to eſtabliſh any deſpotic authority over them. Their governments, though monarchical,[b] were free, as well as thoſe of all the Celtic nations; and the common people ſeem even to have enjoyed more liberty among them[c] than among the nations of Gaul,[d] from whom they were deſcended. Each ſtate was divided into factions within itſelf;[e] it was agitated with jealouſy or animoſity againſt the neighbouring ſtates: and, while the arts of peace were yet unknown, wars were the chief occupation, and formed the chief object of ambition among the people.

The religion of the Britons was one of the moſt conſiderable parts of their government; and the Druids, who were their prieſts, poſſeſſed great authority among them. Beſides miniſtering at the altar, and directing all religious duties, they preſided over the education of youth; they enjoyed an immunity from wars and taxes; they poſſeſſed both the civil and criminal juriſdiction; they decided all controverſies among ſtates as well as among private perſons; and whoever refuſed to ſubmit to their decree was expoſed to the moſt ſevere penalties. The ſentence of excommunication was pronounced againſt him; he was forbidden acceſs to the ſacrifices or public worſhip; he was debarred all intercourſe with his fellow citizens, even in the common affairs of life; his company was univerſally ſhunned, as profane and dangerous; he was refuſed the protection of law;[f] and death itſelf became an acceptable relief from the miſery and infamy to which he was expoſed. Thus the bands of government, which were naturally looſe among that rude and turbulent people, were happily corroborated by the terrors of their ſuperſtition.

No ſpecies of ſuperſtition was ever more terrible than that of the Druids. Beſides the ſevere penalties, which it was in the power of the eccleſiaſtics to inflict in this world, they inculcated the eternal tranſmigration of ſouls; and thereby extended their authority as far as the fears of their timorous votaries. They practiſed their rites in dark groves or other ſecret receſſes:[g] and, in order to throw a greater myſtery over their religion, they communicated their doctrines only to the initiated, and ſtrictly forbad the committing of them to writing, leſt they ſhould at any time be expoſed to the examination of the profane vulgar. Human ſacrifices were practiſed among them. The ſpoils of war were often devoted to their divinities; and they puniſhed with the ſevereſt tortures whoever dared to ſecrete any part of the conſecrated offering. Theſe treaſures they kept in woods and

BRITISH COINS

The LANDING of JULIUS CAESAR.

CHAP. I. II. III

THE BRITONS: ROMANS: SAXONS. THE HEPTARCHY. THE KINGDOMS OF KENT: NORTHUMBERLAND: EAST ANGLIA: MERCIA: ESSEX: SUSSEX WESSEX.—EGBERT: ETHELWOLF: ETHELBALD & ETHELBERT: ETHERED: ALFRED: EDWARD THE ELDER: ATHELSTAN: EDMUND: EDRED: EDWY: EDGAR: EDWARD THE MARTYR.—ETHELRED: SETTLEMENT OF THE NORMANS: EDMUND IRONSIDE: CANUTE: HAROLD HAREFOOT: HARDICANUTE: EDWARD THE CONFESSOR: HAROLD.—FIRST SAXON GOVERNMENT: SUCCESSION OF THE KINGS: THE WITTENAGEMOT THE ARISTOCRACY: THE SEVERAL ORDERS OF MEN: COURTS OF JUSTICE: CRIMINAL LAW: RULES OF PROOF: MILITARY FORCE: PUBLIC REVENUE: VALUE OF MONEY: MANNERS.

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foreſts, ſecured by no other guard than the terrors of their religion;[h] and this ſteady conqueſt over human avidity may be regarded as more ſignal than their prompting men to the moſt extraordinary and moſt violent efforts. No idolatrous worſhip ever attained ſuch an aſcendant over mankind as that of the ancient Gauls and Britons: and the Romans, after their conqueſt, finding it impoſſible to reconcile thoſe nations to the laws and inſtitutions of their maſters, while it maintained its authority, were at laſt obliged to aboliſh it by penal ſtatutes; a violence which had never, in any other inſtance, been practiſed by thoſe tolerating conquerors.[i]

THE ROMANS.

A.C. 55....A.D. 448.

THE Britons had long remained in this rude but independent ſtate, when Cæſar, having overrun all Gaul by his victories, firſt caſt his eye on their iſland. He was not allured either by its riches or its renown; but, being ambitious of carrying the Roman arms into a new world, then moſtly unknown, he took advantage of a ſhort interval in his Gaulic wars, and made an invaſion on Britain. The natives, informed of his intention, were ſenſible of the unequal conteſt, and endeavoured to appeaſe him by ſubmiſſions; which, however, retarded not the execution of his deſign. After ſome reſiſtance, he landed, as is ſuppoſed, at Deal; and, having obtained ſeveral advantages over the Britons, and obliged them to promiſe hoſtages for their future obedience, he was conſtrained, by the neceſſity of his affairs and the approach of winter, to withdraw his forces into Gaul. The Britons, relieved from the terror of his arms, neglected the performance of their ſtipulations: and that haughty conqueror reſolved next

ſummer to chaſtiſe them for this breach of treaty. He landed with a greater force; and, though he found a more regular reſiſtance from the Britons, who had united under Caſſivelaunus, one of their petty princes, he diſcomfited them in every action. He advanced into the country; paſſed the Thames in the face of the enemy; took and burned the capital of Caſſivelaunus; eſtabliſhed his ally Mandubratius in the ſovereignty of the Trinobantes; and, having obliged the inhabitants to make him new ſubmiſſions, he again returned with his army into Gaul, and left the authority of the Romans more nominal than real in this iſland.

The civil wars which enſued, and which prepared the way for the eſtabliſhment of monarchy in Rome, ſaved the Britons from that yoke which was ready to be impoſed upon them. Auguſtus, the ſucceſſor of Cæſar, content with the victory obtained over the liberties of his own country, was little ambitious of acquiring fame by foreign wars; and, being apprehenſive left the ſame unlimited extent of dominion, which had ſubverted the republic, might alſo overwhelm the empire, he recommended it to his ſucceſſors never to enlarge the territories of the Romans. Tiberius, jealous of the fame which might be acquired by his generals, made this advice of Auguſtus a pretence for his inactivity.[k] The mad ſallies of Caligula, in which he menaced Britain with an invaſion, ſerved only to expoſe himſelf and the empire to ridicule. And the Britons had now, during almoſt a century, enjoyed their liberty unmoleſted; when the Romans, in the reign of Claudius, began to think ſeriouſly of reducing them under their dominion. Without ſeeking any more juſtifiable reaſons of hoſtility than were employed by the late Europeans in ſubjecting the Africans and Americans, they ſent over an army under the command of Plautius, an able general, who gained ſome victories, and made a conſiderable progreſs in ſubduing

the inhabitants. Claudius himſelf, finding matters ſufficiently prepared for his reception, made a journey into Britain, and received the ſubmiſſion of ſeveral Britiſh ſtates; the Cantii, Atrebates, Regni, and Trinobantes; who inhabited the ſouth-eaſt parts of the iſland, and whom their poſſeſſions and more cultivated manner of life rendered willing to purchaſe peace at the expenſe of their liberty. The other Britons, under the command of Caractacus, ſtill maintained an obſtinate reſiſtance; and the Romans made little progreſs againſt them, till Oſtorius Scapula was ſent over to command their armies. This general advanced the Roman conqueſts over the Britons; pierced into the country of the Silures, a warlike nation, who inhabited the banks of the Severn; defeated Caractacus in a great battle; took him priſoner, and ſent him to Rome; where his magnanimous behaviour procured him better treatment than thoſe conquerors uſually beſtowed on captive princes.[1]

Notwithſtanding theſe misfortunes the Britons were not ſubdued; and this iſland was regarded by the ambitious Romans as a field in which military honour might ſtill be acquired. Under the reign of Nero, Suetonius Paulinus was inveſted with the command, and prepared to ſignalize his name by victories over thoſe barbarians. Finding that the iſland of Mona, now Angleſea, was the chief ſeat of the Druids, he reſolved to attack it, and to ſubject a place, which was the centre of their ſuperſtition, and which afforded protection to all their baffled forces. The Britons endeavoured to obſtruct his landing on this ſacred iſland, both by the force of their arms and the terrors of their religion. The women and prieſts were intermingled with the ſoldiers upon the ſhore; and, running about with flaming torches in their hands, and toſſing their diſhevelled hair, they ſtruck greater terror into the aſtoniſhed Romans, by their howlings, cries, and execrations, than the real danger from the armed forces was

able to inſpire. But Suetonius, exhorting his troops to deſpiſe the menaces of a ſuperſtition which they deſpiſed, impelled them to the attack; drove the Britons off the field; burned the Druids in the ſame fires which thoſe prieſts had prepared for their captive enemies; deſtroyed all the conſecrated groves and altars; and, having thus triumphed over the religion of the Britons, he thought his future progreſs would be eaſy in reducing the people to ſubjection: but he was diſappointed in his expectations. The Britons, taking advantage of his abſence, were all in arms; and, headed by Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, who had been treated in the moſt ignominious manner by the Roman tribunes, had already attacked with ſucceſs ſeveral ſettlements of their inſulting conquerors. Suetonius haſtened to the protection of London, which was already a flouriſhing Roman colony; but he found, on his arrival, that it would be requiſite, for the general ſafety, to abandon that place to the mercileſs fury of the enemy. London was reduced to aſhes; ſuch of the inhabitants as remained in it were cruelly maſſacred; the Romans and all ſtrangers, to the number of ſeventy thouſand, were every where put to the ſword without diſtinction; and the Britons, by rendering the war thus bloody, ſeemed determined to cut off all hopes of peace or compoſition with the enemy. But this cruelty was revenged by Suetonius in a great and deciſive battle, where eighty thouſand of the Britons are ſaid to have periſhed; and Boadicea herſelf, rather than fall into the hands of the enraged victor, put an end to her own life by poiſon.[m] Nero ſoon after recalled Suetonius from a government, where, by ſuffering and inflicting ſo many ſeverities, he was judged improper for compoſing the angry and alarmed minds of the inhabitants. After ſome interval Cerealis received the command from Veſpaſian, and by his bravery propagated the terror of the Roman arms. Julius Frontinus ſucceeded Cerealis both in authority and in re-

BOADICEA HARANGUING THE BRITONS.

putation. But the general, who finally eſtabliſhed the dominion of the Romans in this iſland, was Julius Agricola, who governed it in the reigns of Veſpaſian, Titus, and Domitian, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf in that ſcene of action.

This great commander formed a regular plan for ſubduing Britain, and rendering the acquiſition uſeful to the conquerors. He carried his victorious arms northwards; defeated the Britons in every encounter; pierced into the inacceſſible foreſts and mountains of Caledonia; reduced every ſtate to ſubjection in the ſouthern parts of the iſland; and chaſed before him all the men of fiercer and more intractable ſpirits, who deemed war and death itſelf leſs intolerable than ſervitude under the victors. He even defeated them in a deciſive action, which they fought under Galgacus their leader; and, having fixed a chain of garriſons between the friths of Clyde and Forth, he thereby cut off the ruder and more barren parts of the iſland, and ſecured the Roman province from the incurſions of the barbarous inhabitants.[n]

During theſe military enterpriſes he neglected not the arts of peace. He introduced laws and civility among the Britons; taught them to deſire and raiſe all the conveniencies of life; reconciled them to the Roman language and manners; inſtructed them in letters and ſcience; and employed every expedient to render thoſe chains, which he had forged, both eaſy and agreeable to them.[o] The inhabitants, having experienced how unequal their own force was to reſiſt that of the Romans, acquieſced in the dominion of their maſters, and were gradually incorporated as a part of that mighty empire.

This was the laſt durable conqueſt made by the Romans: and Britain, once ſubdued, gave no farther inquietude to the victor. Caledonia alone, defended by its barren mountains, and by the contempt which the Romans entertained for it, ſometimes infeſted the more cultivated parts of the iſland by the incurſions

of its inhabitants. The better to ſecure the frontiers of the empire, Adrian, who viſited this iſland, built a rampart between the river Tyne and the frith of Solway. Lollius Urbicus, under Antoninus Pius, erected one in the place where Agricola had formerly eſtabliſhed his garriſons. Severus, who made an expedition into Britain, and carried his arms to the moſt northern extremity of it, added new fortifications to the wall of Adrian. And, during the reigns of all the Roman emperors, ſuch a profound tranquillity prevailed in Britain, that little mention is made of the affairs of that iſland by any hiſtorian. The only incidents which occur are ſome ſeditions or rebellions of the Roman legions quartered there, and ſome uſurpations of the imperial dignity by the Roman governors. The natives, diſarmed, diſpirited, and ſubmiſſive, had loſt all deſire, and even idea, of their former liberty and independence.

But the period was now come, when that enormous fabric of the Roman empire, which had diffuſed ſlavery and oppreſſion, together with peace and civility, over ſo conſiderable a part of the globe, was approaching towards its final diſſolution. Italy, and the centre of the empire, removed, during ſo many ages, from all concern in the wars, had entirely loſt the military ſpirit, and were peopled by an enervated race, equally diſpoſed to ſubmit to a foreign yoke, or to the tyranny of their own rulers. The emperors found themſelves obliged to recruit their legions from the frontier provinces, where the genius of war, though languiſhing, was not totally extinct: and theſe mercenary forces, careleſs of laws and civil inſtitutions, eſtabliſhed a military government, no leſs dangerous to the ſovereign than to the people. The farther progreſs of the ſame diſorders introduced the bordering barbarians into the ſervice of the Romans: and thoſe fierce nations, having now added diſcipline to their native bravery, could no longer be reſtrained by the impotent policy of the em-

perors, who were accuſtomed to employ one in the deſtruction of the others. Senſible of their own force, and allured by the proſpect of ſo rich a prize, the northern barbarians, in the reign of Arcadius and Honorius, aſſailed at once all the frontiers of the Roman empire; and, having firſt ſatiated their avidity by plunder, began to think of fixing a ſettlement in the waſted provinces. The more diſtant barbarians, who occupied the deſerted habitations of the former, advanced in their acquiſitions, and preſſed with their incumbent weight the Roman ſtate, already unequal to the load which it ſuſtained. Inſtead of arming the people in their own defence, the emperors recalled all the diſtant legions, in whom alone they could repoſe confidence; and collected the whole military force for the defence of the capital and centre of the empire. The neceſſity of ſelf-preſervation had ſuperſeded the ambition of power; and the ancient point of honour, never to contract the limits of the empire, could no longer be attended to in this deſperate extremity.

Britain by its ſituation was removed from the fury of theſe barbarous incurſions; and, being alſo a remote province, not much valued by the Romans, the legions which defended it were carried over to the protection of Italy and Gaul. But that province, though ſecured by the ſea againſt the inroads of the greater tribes of barbarians, found enemies on its frontiers, who took advantage of its preſent defenceleſs ſituation. The Picts and Scots, who dwelt in the northern parts beyond the wall of Antoninus, made incurſions upon their peaceable and effeminate neighbours: and, beſides the temporary depredations which they committed, theſe combined nations threatened the whole province with ſubjection; or, what the inhabitants more dreaded, with plunder and devaſtation. The Picts ſeem to have been a tribe of the native Britiſh race, who, having been chaſed into the northern parts by the conqueſts of Agricola, had there in-

termingled with the ancient inhabitants. The Scots were derived from the ſame Celtic origin; had firſt been eſtabliſhed in Ireland; had migrated to the north-weſt coaſts of this iſland; and had long been accuſtomed, as well from their old as their new ſeats, to infeſt the Roman province by piracy [p] and rapine. Theſe tribes, finding their more opulent neighbours expoſed to invaſion, ſoon broke over the Roman wall, no longer defended by the Roman arms; and, though a contemptible enemy in themſelves, met with no reſiſtance from the unwarlike inhabitants. The Britons, accuſtomed to have recourſe to the emperors for defence as well as government, made ſupplications to Rome; and one legion was ſent over for their protection. This force was an overmatch for the barbarians; repelled their invaſion; routed them in every engagement; and, having chaſed them into their ancient limits, returned in triumph to the defence of the ſouthern provinces of the empire.[q] Their retreat brought on a new invaſion of the enemy. The Britons made again an application to Rome, and again obtained the aſſiſtance of a legion, which proved effectual for their relief. But the Romans, reduced to extremities at home, and fatigued with thoſe diſtant expeditions, informed the Britons that they muſt no longer look to them for ſuccour; exhorted them to arm in their own defence; and urged that, as they were now their own maſters, it became them to protect by their valour that independence which their ancient lords had conferred upon them.[r] That they might leave the iſland with the better grace, the Romans aſſiſted them in erecting anew the wall of Severus, which was built entirely of ſtone, and which the Britons had not at that time artificers ſkilful enough to repair:[s] and, having done this laſt good office to the inhabitants, they bid a final adieu to Britain about the year 448, after being maſters of the more conſiderable part of it during the courſe of near four centuries.

ROMAN

THE BRITONS.

THE abject Britons regarded this preſent of liberty as fatal to them; and were in no condition to put in practice the prudent counſel given them by the Romans, to arm in their own defence. Unaccuſtomed both to the perils of war and to the cares of civil government, they found themſelves incapable of forming or executing any meaſures for reſiſting the incurſions of the barbarians. Gratian alſo and Conſtantine, two Romans, who had a little before aſſumed the purple in Britain, had carried over to the continent the flower of the Britiſh youth; and, having periſhed in their unſucceſsful attempts on the imperial throne, had deſpoiled the iſland of thoſe who, in this deſperate extremity, were beſt able to defend it. The Picts and Scots, finding that the Romans had finally relinquiſhed Britain, now regarded the whole as their prey, and attacked the northern wall with redoubled forces. The Britons, already ſubdued by their own fears, found the ramparts but a weak defence for them; and, deſerting their ſtation, left the country entirely open to the inroads of the barbarous enemy. The invaders carried devaſtation and ruin along with them; and exerted to the utmoſt their native ferocity, which was not mitigated by the helpleſs condition and ſubmiſſive behaviour of the inhabitants.[t] The unhappy Britons had a third time recourſe to Rome, which had declared its reſolution for ever to abandon them. Ætius, the patrician, ſuſtained, at that time, by his valour and magnanimity, the tottering ruins of the empire, and revived for a moment, among the degenerate Romans, the ſpirit, as well as diſcipline, of their anceſtors. The Britiſh ambaſſadors carried to him the letter of their countrymen, which was inſcribed 'The Groans of the Britons.' The tenor of the epiſtle was ſuitable to its ſuperſcription. 'The barbarians,' ſay they, 'on the one hand,

chaſe us into the ſea; the ſea, on the other, throws us back upon the barbarians; and we have only the hard choice left us of periſhing by the ſword [u] or by the waves.' But Ætius, preſſed by the arms of Attila, the moſt terrible enemy that ever aſſailed the empire, had no leiſure to attend to the complaints of allies, whom generoſity alone could induce him to aſſiſt.[v] The Britons, thus rejected, were reduced to deſpair; deſerted their habitations; abandoned tillage; and, flying for protection to the foreſts and mountains, ſuffered equally from hunger and from the enemy. The barbarians themſelves began to feel the preſſures of famine in a country which they had ravaged; and, being haraſſed by the diſperſed Britons, who had not dared to reſiſt them in a body, they retreated with their ſpoils into their own country.[w]

The Britons, taking advantage of this interval, returned to their uſual occupations; and the favourable ſeaſons, which ſucceeded, ſeconded their induſtry, made them ſoon forget their paſt miſeries, and reſtored to them great plenty of all the neceſſaries of life. No more can be imagined to have been poſſeſſed by a people ſo rude, who had not, without the aſſiſtance of the Romans, art of maſonry ſufficient to raiſe a ſtone rampart for their own defence. Yet the monkiſh hiſtorians,[x] who treat of thoſe events, complain of the luxury of the Britons during this period; and aſcribe to that vice, not to their cowardice or improvident counſels, all their ſubſequent calamities.

The Britons, entirely occupied in the enjoyment of the preſent interval of peace, made no proviſion for reſiſting the enemy; who, invited by their former timid behaviour, ſoon threatened them with a new invaſion. We are not exactly informed what ſpecies of civil government the Romans on their departure had left among the Britons; but it appears probable that the great men in the different diſtricts aſſumed a kind of regal, though precarious, authority; and lived in a great meaſure independent of each

other.[y] To this diſunion of counſels were alſo added the diſputes of theology: and the diſciples of Pelagius, who was himſelf a native of Britain, having increaſed to a great multitude, gave alarm to the clergy, who ſeem to have been more intent on ſuppreſſing them than on oppoſing the public enemy.[z] Labouring under theſe domeſtic evils, and menaced with a foreign invaſion, the Britons attended only to the ſuggeſtions of their preſent fears; and, following the counſels of Vortigern, prince of Dumnonium (who, though ſtained with every vice, poſſeſſed the chief authority among them),[a] they ſent into Germany a deputation to invite over the Saxons for their protection and aſſiſtance.

THE SAXONS.

449....585.

Of all the barbarous nations, known either in ancient or modern times, the Germans ſeem to have been the moſt diſtinguiſhed both by their manners and political inſtitutions, and to have carried to the higheſt pitch the virtues of valour and love of liberty; the only virtues which can have place among an uncivilized people, where juſtice and humanity are commonly neglected. Kingly government, even when eſtabliſhed among the Germans (for it was not univerſal), poſſeſſed a very limited authority; and, though the ſovereign was uſually choſen from among the royal family, he was directed in every meaſure by the common conſent of the nation over whom he preſided. When any important affairs were tranſacted all the warriors met in arms; the men of greateſt authority employed perſuaſion to engage their conſent: the people expreſſed their approbation by rattling their armour, or their diſſent by murmurs; there was no neceſſity for a nice

ſcrutiny of votes among a multitude, who were uſually carried with a ſtrong current to one ſide or the other; and the meaſure, thus ſuddenly choſen by general agreement, was executed with alacrity, and proſecuted with vigour. Even in war the princes governed more by example than by authority: but in peace the civil union was in a great meaſure diſſolved; and the inferior leaders adminiſtered juſtice after an independent manner, each in his particular diſtrict. Theſe were elected by the votes of the people in their great councils; and, though regard was paid to nobility in the choice, their perſonal qualities, chiefly their valour, procured them, from the ſuffrages of their fellow citizens, that honourable but dangerous diſtinction. The warriors of each tribe attached themſelves to their leader with the moſt devoted affection and moſt unſhaken conſtancy. They attended him as his ornament in peace, as his defence in war, as his council in the adminiſtration of juſtice. Their conſtant emulation in military renown diſſolved not that inviolable friendſhip which they profeſſed to their chieftain and to each other. To die for the honour of their band was their chief ambition: to ſurvive its diſgrace, or the death of their leader, was infamous. They even carried into the field their women and children, who adopted all the martial ſentiments of the men: and, being thus impelled by every human motive, they were invincible, where they were not oppoſed either by the ſimilar manners and inſtitutions of the neighbouring Germans, or by the ſuperior diſcipline, arms, and numbers, of the Romans.[b]

The leaders and their military companions were maintained by the labour of their ſlaves, or by that of the weaker and leſs warlike part of the community whom they defended. The contributions which they levied went not beyond a bare ſubſiſtence; and the honours, acquired by a ſuperior rank, were the only reward of their ſuperior dangers and fatigues. All the refined arts of life were unknown among the Germans; tillage itſelf was

almoſt wholly neglected; they even ſeem to have been anxious to prevent any improvements of that nature; and the leaders, by annually diſtributing anew all the land among the inhabitants of each village, kept them from attaching themſelves to particular poſſeſſions, or making ſuch progreſs in agriculture as might divert their attention from military expeditions, the chief occupation of the community.[c]

The Saxons had been for ſome time regarded as one of the moſt warlike tribes of this fierce people, and had become the terror of the neighbouring nations.[d] They had diffuſed themſelves from the northern parts of Germany and the Cimbrian Cherſoneſus, and had taken poſſeſſion of all the ſea coaſt from the mouth of the Rhine to Jutland; whence they had long infeſted by their piracies all the eaſtern and ſouthern parts of Britain, and the northern of Gaul.[e] In order to oppoſe their inroads, the Romans had eſtabliſhed an officer, whom they called 'Count of the Saxon ſhore:' and, as the naval arts can flouriſh among a civilized people alone, they ſeem to have been more ſucceſsful in repelling the Saxons than any of the other barbarians by whom they were invaded. The diſſolution of the Roman power invited them to renew their inroads: and it was an acceptable circumſtance that the deputies of the Britons appeared among them, and prompted them to undertake an enterpriſe, to which they were of themſelves ſufficiently inclined.[f]

Hengiſt and Horſa, two brothers, poſſeſſed great credit among the Saxons, and were much celebrated both for their valour and nobility. They were reputed, as moſt of the Saxon princes, to be ſprung from Woden, who was worſhipped as a god among thoſe nations, and they are ſaid to be his great grandſons;[g] a circumſtance which added much to their authority. We ſhall not attempt to trace any higher the origin of thoſe princes and nations. It is evident what fruitleſs labour it muſt be to ſearch,

in thoſe barbarous and illiterate ages, for the annals of a people, when their firſt leaders, known in any true hiſtory, were believed by them to be the fourth in deſcent from a fabulous deity, or from a man exalted by ignorance into that character. The dark induſtry of antiquaries, led by imaginary analogies of names, or by uncertain traditions, would in vain attempt to pierce into that deep obſcurity which covers the remote hiſtory of thoſe nations.

Theſe two brothers, obſerving the other provinces of Germany to be occupied by a warlike and neceſſitous people, and the rich provinces of Gaul already conquered or overrun by other German tribes, found it eaſy to perſuade their countrymen to embrace the ſole enterpriſe which promiſed a favourable opportunity of diſplaying their valour and gratifying their avidity. They embarked their troops in three veſſels; and, about the year 449 or 450,[h] carried over ſixteen hundred men, who landed in the iſle of Thanet, and immediately marched to the defence of the Britons againſt the northern invaders. The Scots and Picts were unable to reſiſt the valour of theſe auxiliaries; and the Britons, applauding their own wiſdom in calling over the Saxons, hoped thenceforth to enjoy peace and ſecurity under the powerful protection of that warlike people.

But Hengiſt and Horſa, perceiving, from their eaſy victory over the Scots and Picts, with what facility they might ſubdue the Britons themſelves, who had not been able to reſiſt thoſe feeble invaders, were determined to conquer and fight for their own grandeur, not for the defence of their degenerate allies. They ſent intelligence to Saxony of the fertility and riches of Britain: and repreſented as certain the ſubjection of a people ſo long diſuſed to arms; who, being now cut off from the Roman empire, of which they had been a province during ſo many ages, had not yet acquired any union among themſelves, and were deſtitute of all affection to their new liberties, and of all

national attachments and regards.[j] The vices and pufillanimity of Vortigern, the Britiſh leader, were a new ground of hope; and the Saxons in Germany, following ſuch agreeable proſpects, ſoon reinforced Hengiſt and Horſa with five thouſand men, who came over in ſeventeen veſſels. The Britons now began to entertain apprehenſions of their allies, whoſe numbers they found continually augmenting; but thought of no remedy, except a paſſive ſubmiſſion and connivance. This weak expedient ſoon failed them. The Saxons fought a quarrel, by complaining that their ſubſidies were ill paid, and their proviſions withdrawn:[k] and immediately, taking off the maſk, they formed an alliance with the Picts and Scots, and proceeded to open hoſtility againſt the Britons.

The Britons, impelled by theſe violent extremities, and rouſed to indignation againſt their treacherous auxiliaries, were neceſſitated to take arms; and, having depoſed Vortigern, who had become odious from his vices, and from the bad event of his raſh counſels, they put themſelves under the command of his ſon Vortimer. They fought many battles with their enemies; and, though the victories in theſe actions be diſputed between the Britiſh and Saxon annaliſts, the progreſs ſtill made by the Saxons proves that the advantage was commonly on their ſide. In one battle, however, fought at Eglesford, now Ailsford, Horſa, the Saxon general, was ſlain, and left the ſole command over his countrymen in the hands of Hengiſt. This active general, continually reinforced by freſh numbers from Germany, carried devaſtation into the moſt remote corners of Britain; and, being chiefly anxious to ſpread the terror of his arms, he ſpared neither age, nor ſex, nor condition, wherever he marched with his victorious forces. The private and public edifices of the Britons were reduced to aſhes; the prieſts were ſlaughtered on the altars by thoſe idolatrous ravagers; the biſhops and nobility ſhared the fate of the vulgar; the people, flying to the mountains and

deſerts, were intercepted and butchered in heaps: ſome were glad to accept of life and ſervitude under their victors; others, deſerting their native country, took ſhelter in the province of Armorica; where, being charitably received by a people of the ſame language and manners, they ſettled in great numbers, and gave the country the name of Brittany.[l]

The Britiſh writers aſſign one cauſe which facilitated the entrance of the Saxons into this iſland; the love with which Vortigern was at firſt ſeized for Rovena, the daughter of Hengiſt, and which that artful warrior made uſe of to blind the eyes of the imprudent monarch.[m] The ſame hiſtorians add that Vortimer died; and that Vortigern, being reſtored to the throne, accepted of a banquet from Hengiſt at Stonehenge, where three hundred of his nobility were treacherouſly ſlaughtered, and himſelf detained captive.[n] But theſe ſtories ſeem to have been invented by the Welſh authors, in order to palliate the weak reſiſtance made at firſt by their countrymen, and to account for the rapid progreſs and licentious devaſtations of the Saxons.[o]

After the death of Vortimer, Ambroſius, a Briton, though of Roman deſcent, was inveſted with the command over his countrymen; and endeavoured, not without ſucceſs, to unite them in their reſiſtance againſt the Saxons. Thoſe conteſts increaſed the animoſity between the two nations, and rouſed the military ſpirit of the ancient inhabitants, which had before been ſunk into a fatal lethargy. Hengiſt, however, notwithſtanding their oppoſition, ſtill maintained his ground in Britain; and, in order to divide the forces and attention of the natives, he called over a new tribe of Saxons, under the command of his brother Octa, and of Ebiſſa, the ſon of Octa: and he ſettled them in Northumberland. He himſelf remained in the ſouthern parts of the iſland, and laid the foundation of the kingdom of Kent, comprehending the county of that name, Middleſex, Eſſex, and part of Surrey.

VORTIGERN AND ROVENA

He fixed his royal ſeat at Canterbury, where he governed about forty years; and he died in or near the year 488, leaving his new acquired dominions to his poſterity.

The ſucceſs of Hengiſt excited the avidity of the other northern Germans; and at different times, and under different leaders, they flocked over in multitudes to the invaſion of this iſland. Theſe conquerors were chiefly compoſed of three tribes; the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes;[p] who all paſſed under the common appellation, ſometimes of Saxons, ſometimes of Angles: and, ſpeaking the ſame language, and being governed by the ſame inſtitutions, they were naturally led, from theſe cauſes as well as from their common intereſt, to unite themſelves againſt the ancient inhabitants. The reſiſtance, however, though unequal, was ſtill maintained by the Britons; but became every day more feeble: and their calamities admitted of few intervals, till they were driven into Cornwall and Wales, and received protection from the remote ſituation or inacceſſible mountains of thoſe countries.

The firſt Saxon ſtate, after that of Kent, which was eſtabliſhed in Britain, was the kingdom of South Saxony. In the year[q] 477 Ælla, a Saxon chief, brought over an army from Germany; and, landing on the ſouthern coaſt, proceeded to take poſſeſſion of the neighbouring territory. The Britons, now armed, did not tamely abandon their poſſeſſions; nor were they expelled, till defeated in many battles by their warlike invaders. The moſt memorable action, mentioned by hiſtorians, is that of Meacredes-Burn;[r] where, though the Saxons ſeem to have obtained the victory, they ſuffered ſo conſiderable a loſs, as ſomewhat retarded the progreſs of their conqueſts. But Ælla, reinforced by freſh numbers of his countrymen, again took the field againſt the Britons; and laid ſiege to Andred-Ceaſter, which was defended by the garriſon and inhabitants with deſperate valour.[s] The Saxons, enraged by this reſiſtance, and by the fatigues and dangers which they had ſuf-

tained, redoubled their efforts againſt the place; and, when maſters of it, put all their enemies to the ſword without diſtinction. This deciſive advantage ſecured the conqueſts of Ælla, who aſſumed the name of King, and extended his dominion over Suſſex and a great part of Surrey. He was ſtopped in his progreſs to the eaſt by the kingdom of Kent; in that to the weſt by another tribe of Saxons, who had taken poſſeſſion of that territory.

Theſe Saxons, from the ſituation of the country in which they ſettled, were called the Weſt Saxons; and landed, in the year 495, under the command of Cerdic, and of his ſon Kenric.[t] The Britons were, by paſt experience, ſo much on their guard, and ſo well prepared to receive the enemy, that they gave battle to Cerdic the very day of his landing; and, though vanquiſhed, ſtill defended for ſome time their liberties againſt the invaders. None of the other tribes of Saxons met with ſuch vigorous reſiſtance, or exerted ſuch valour and perſeverance in puſhing their conqueſts. Cerdic was even obliged to call for the aſſiſtance of his countrymen from the kingdoms of Kent and Suſſex, as well as from Germany; and he was thence joined by a freſh army under the command of Porte,[u] and of his ſons Bleda and Megla. Strengthened by theſe ſuccours, he fought, in the year 508, a deſperate battle with the Britons, commanded by Nazan-Leod, who was victorious in the beginning of the action, and routed the wing in which Cerdic himſelf commanded; but Kenric, who had prevailed in the other wing, brought timely aſſiſtance to his father, and reſtored the battle, which ended in a complete victory gained by the Saxons.[w] Nazan-Leod periſhed, with five thouſand of his army; but left the Britons more weakened than diſcouraged by his death. The war ſtill continued, though the ſucceſs was commonly on the ſide of the Saxons; whoſe ſhort ſwords, and cloſe manner of fighting, gave them great advantage over the miſſile weapons of the Britons. Cerdic was not wanting

to his good fortune; and, in order to extend his conqueſts, he laid ſiege to Mount Badon or Baneſdowne near Bath, whither the moſt obſtinate of the diſcomfited Britons had retired. The ſouthern Britons in this extremity applied for aſſiſtance to Arthur, prince of the Silures, whoſe heroic valour now ſuſtained the declining fate of his country.[x] This is that Arthur ſo much celebrated in the ſongs of Thalieſſin and the other Britiſh bards, and whoſe military achievements have been blended with ſo many fables, as even to give occaſion for entertaining a doubt of his real exiſtence. But poets, though they disfigure the moſt certain hiſtory by their fictions, and uſe ſtrange liberties with truth where they are the ſole hiſtorians, as among the Britons, have commonly ſome foundation for their wildeſt exaggerations. Certain it is that the ſiege of Badon was raiſed by the Britons in the year 520; and the Saxons were there diſcomfited in a great battle.[y] This misfortune ſtopped the progreſs of Cerdic, but was not ſufficient to wreſt from him the conqueſts which he had already made. He and his ſon Kenric, who ſucceeded him, eſtabliſhed the kingdom of the Weſt Saxons, or of Weſſex, over the counties of Hants, Dorſet, Wilts, Berks, and the Iſle of Wight; and left their new acquired dominions to their poſterity. Cerdic died in 534, Kenric in 560.

While the Saxons made this progreſs in the ſouth, their countrymen were not leſs active in other quarters. In the year 527 a great tribe of adventurers, under ſeveral leaders, landed on the eaſt coaſt of Britain; and, after fighting many battles, of which hiſtory has preſerved no particular account, they eſtabliſhed three new kingdoms in this iſland. Uffa aſſumed the title of king of the Eaſt Angles in 575; Crida that of Mercia in 585;[z] and Erkenwin that of Eaſt Saxony or Eſſex nearly about the ſame time, but the year is uncertain. This latter kingdom was diſmembered from that of Kent; and comprehended Eſſex, Middleſex, and

part of Hertfordſhire. That of the Eaſt Angles, the counties of Cambridge, Suffolk, and Norfolk. Mercia was extended over all the middle counties, from the banks of the Severn to the frontiers of theſe two kingdoms.

The Saxons, ſoon after the landing of Hengiſt, had been planted in Northumberland; but, as they met with an obſtinate reſiſtance, and made but ſmall progreſs in ſubduing the inhabitants, their affairs were in ſo unſettled a condition that none of their princes for a long time aſſumed the appellation of king. At laſt, in 547,[a] Ida, a Saxon prince of great valour,[b] who claimed a deſcent, as did all the other princes of that nation, from Woden, brought over a reinforcement from Germany, and enabled the Northumbrians to carry on their conqueſts over the Britons. He entirely ſubdued the county now called Northumberland, the biſhopric of Durham, as well as ſome of the ſouth-eaſt counties of Scotland; and he aſſumed the crown under the title of king of Bernicia. Nearly about the ſame time Ælla, another Saxon prince, having conquered Lancaſhire and the greater part of Yorkſhire, received the appellation of king of Deïri.[c] Theſe two kingdoms were united in the perſon of Ethilfrid, grandſon of Ida, who married Acca, the daughter of Ælla; and, expelling her brother Edwin, eſtabliſhed one of the moſt powerful of the Saxon kingdoms by the title of Northumberland. How far his dominions extended into the country now called Scotland is uncertain: but it cannot be doubted that all the lowlands, eſpecially the eaſt coaſt of that country, were peopled in a great meaſure from Germany; though the expeditions, made by the ſeveral Saxon adventurers, have eſcaped the records of hiſtory. The language ſpoken in thoſe countries, which is purely Saxon, is a ſtronger proof of this event than can be oppoſed by the imperfect, or rather fabulous, annals which are obtruded on us by the Scottiſh hiſtorians.

THE HEPTARCHY.

THUS was eſtabliſhed, after a violent conteſt of near a hundred and fifty years, the Heptarchy, or ſeven Saxon kingdoms, in Britain; and the whole ſouthern part of the iſland, except Wales and Cornwall, had totally changed its inhabitants, language, cuſtoms, and political inſtitutions. The Britons, under the Roman dominion, had made ſuch advances towards arts and civil manners, that they had built twenty-eight conſiderable cities within their province, beſides a great number of villages and country ſeats:[d] but the fierce conquerors, by whom they were now ſubdued, threw every thing back into ancient barbarity; and thoſe few natives, who were not either maſſacred or expelled their habitations, were reduced to the moſt abject ſlavery. None of the other northern conquerors, the Franks, Goths, Vandals, or Burgundians, though they overran the ſouthern provinces of the empire like a mighty torrent, made ſuch devaſtations in the conquered territories, or were inflamed into ſo violent an animoſity againſt the ancient inhabitants. As the Saxons came over at intervals in ſeparate bodies, the Britons, however at firſt unwarlike, were tempted to make reſiſtance; and hoſtilities, being thereby prolonged, proved more deſtructive to both parties, eſpecially to the vanquiſhed. The firſt invaders from Germany, inſtead of excluding other adventurers, who muſt ſhare with them the ſpoils of the ancient inhabitants, were obliged to ſolicit freſh ſupplies from their own country; and a total extermination of the Britons became the ſole expedient for providing a ſettlement and ſubſiſtence to the new planters. Hence there have been found in hiſtory few conqueſts more ruinous than that of the Saxons, and few revolutions more violent than that which they introduced.

So long as the conteſt was maintained with the natives the ſeveral Saxon princes preſerved a union of counſels and intereſts; but, after the Britons were ſhut up in the barren counties of Cornwall and Wales, and gave no farther diſturbance to the conquerors, the band of alliance was in a great meaſure diſſolved among the princes of the Heptarchy. Though one prince ſeems ſtill to have been allowed, or to have aſſumed, an aſcendant over the whole, his authority, if it ought ever to be deemed regular or legal, was extremely limited; and each ſtate acted as if it had been independent, and wholly ſeparate from the reſt. Wars, therefore, and revolutions, and diſſenſions, were unavoidable among a turbulent and military people; and theſe events, however intricate or confuſed, ought now to become the objects of our attention. But, added to the difficulty of carrying on at once the hiſtory of ſeven independent kingdoms, there is great diſcouragement to a writer, ariſing from the uncertainty, at leaſt barrenneſs, of the accounts tranſmitted to us. The monks, who were the only annaliſts during thoſe ages, lived remote from public affairs; conſidered the civil tranſactions as entirely ſubordinate to the eccleſiaſtical; and, beſides partaking of the ignorance and barbarity which were then univerſal, were ſtrongly infected with credulity, with the love of wonder, and with a propenſity to impoſture; vices almoſt inſeparable from their profeſſion and manner of life. The hiſtory of that period abounds in names, but is extremely barren of events; or the events are related ſo much without circumſtances and cauſes, that the moſt profound or moſt eloquent writer muſt deſpair of rendering them either inſtructive or entertaining to the reader. Even the great learning and vigorous imagination of Milton ſunk under the weight: and this author ſcruples not to declare that the ſkirmiſhes of kites or crows as much merited a particular narrative as the confuſed tranſactions and battles of the Saxon Heptarchy.[c] In order, how-

ever, to connect the events in ſome tolerable meaſure, we ſhall give a ſuccinct account of the ſucceſſions of kings, and of the more remarkable revolutions in each particular kingdom; beginning with that of Kent, which was the firſt eſtabliſhed.

THE KINGDOM OF KENT.

Escus ſucceeded his father Hengiſt in the kingdom of Kent; but ſeems not to have poſſeſſed the military genius of that conqueror, who firſt made way for the entrance of the Saxon arms into Britain. All the Saxons, who fought either the fame of valour or new eſtabliſhments by arms, flocked to the ſtandard of Ælla, king of Suſſex, who was carrying on ſucceſsful war againſt the Britons, and laying the foundations of a new kingdom. Eſcus was content to poſſeſs in tranquillity the kingdom of Kent, which he left in 512 to his ſon Octa; in whoſe time the Eaſt Saxons eſtabliſhed their monarchy, and diſmembered the provinces of Eſſex and Middleſex from that of Kent. His death, after a reign of twenty-two years, made room for his ſon Hermenric in 534; who performed nothing memorable during a reign of thirty-two years, except aſſociating with him his ſon Ethelbert in the government, that he might ſecure the ſucceſſion in his family, and prevent ſuch revolutions as are incident to a turbulent and barbarous monarchy.

Ethelbert revived the reputation of his family, which had languiſhed for ſome generations. The inactivity of his predeceſſors, and the ſituation of his country, ſecured from all hoſtility with the Britons, ſeem to have much enfeebled the warlike genius of the Kentiſh Saxons; and Ethelbert, in his firſt attempt to aggrandize his country, and diſtinguiſh his own name, was unſucceſsful.[f] He was twice diſcomfited in battle by Ceaulin, king

of Weſſex, and obliged to yield the ſuperiority in the Heptarchy to that ambitious monarch; who preſerved no moderation in his victory, and, by reducing the kingdom of Suſſex to ſubjection, excited jealouſy in all the other princes. An aſſociation was formed againſt him; and Ethelbert, intruſted with the command of the allies, gave him battle,[g] and obtained a deciſive victory. Ceaulin died ſoon after; and Ethelbert ſucceeded as well to his aſcendant among the Saxon ſtates as to his other ambitious projects. He reduced all the princes, except the king of Northumberland, to a ſtrict dependance upon him; and even eſtabliſhed himſelf by force on the throne of Mercia, the moſt extenſive of the Saxon kingdoms. Apprehenſive, however, of a dangerous league againſt him, like that by which he himſelf had been enabled to overthrow Ceaulin, he had the prudence to reſign the kingdom of Mercia to Webba, the rightful heir, the ſon of Crida, who had firſt founded that monarchy. But, governed ſtill by ambition more than by juſtice, he gave Webba poſſeſſion of the crown on ſuch conditions as rendered him little better than a tributary prince under his artful benefactor.

But the moſt memorable event which diſtinguiſhed the reign of this great prince was the introduction of the Chriſtian religion among the Engliſh Saxons. The ſuperſtition of the Germans, particularly that of the Saxons, was of the groſſeſt and moſt barbarous kind; and, being founded on traditional tales received from their anceſtors, not reduced to any ſyſtem, not ſupported by political inſtitutions like that of the Druids, it ſeems to have made little impreſſion on its votaries, and to have eaſily reſigned its place to the new doctrine promulgated to them. Woden, whom they deemed the anceſtor of all their princes, was regarded as the god of war, and by a natural conſequence became their ſupreme deity, and the chief object of their religious worſhip. They believed that, if they obtained the favour of this divinity by their

valour (for they made leſs account of the other virtues), they ſhould be admitted after their death into his hall; and, repoſing on couches, ſhould ſatiate themſelves with ale from the ſkulls of their enemies whom they had ſlain in battle. Incited by this idea of paradiſe, which gratified at once the paſſion of revenge and that of intemperance, the ruling inclinations of barbarians, they deſpiſed the dangers of war, and increaſed their native ferocity againſt the vanquiſhed by their religious prejudices. We know little of the other theological tenets of the Saxons: we only learn that they were polytheiſts; that they worſhipped the ſun and moon; that they adored the god of thunder, under the name of Thor; that they had images in their temples; that they practiſed ſacrifices; believed firmly in ſpells and enchantments; and admitted in general a ſyſtem of doctrines which they held as ſacred, but which, like all other ſuperſtitions, muſt carry the air of the wildeſt extravagance, if propounded to thoſe who are not familiarized to it from their earlieſt infancy.

The conſtant hoſtilities which the Saxons maintained againſt the Britons would naturally indiſpoſe them for receiving the Chriſtian faith, when preached to them by ſuch inveterate enemies; and perhaps the Britons, as is objected to them by Gildas and Bede, were not overfond of communicating to their cruel invaders the doctrine of eternal life and ſalvation. But, as a civilized people, however ſubdued by arms, ſtill maintain a ſenſible ſuperiority over barbarous and ignorant nations, all the other northern conquerors of Europe had been already induced to embrace the Chriſtian faith, which they found eſtabliſhed in the empire; and it was impoſſible but the Saxons, informed of this event, muſt have regarded, with ſome degree of veneration, a doctrine which had acquired the aſcendant over all their brethren. However limited in their views, they could not but have perceived a degree of cultivation in the ſouthern countries beyond what

they themſelves poſſeſſed; and it was natural for them to yield to that ſuperior knowledge, as well as zeal, by which the inhabitants of the Chriſtian kingdoms were even at that time diſtinguiſhed.

But theſe cauſes might long have failed of producing any conſiderable effect, had not a favourable incident prepared the means of introducing Chriſtianity into Kent. Ethelbert, in his father's lifetime, had married Bertha, the only daughter of Caribert, king of Paris,[h] one of the deſcendants of Clovis, the conqueror of Gaul: but, before he was admitted to this alliance, he was obliged to ſtipulate that the princeſs ſhould enjoy the free exercife of her religion; a conceſſion not difficult to be obtained from the idolatrous Saxons.[i] Bertha brought over a French biſhop to the court of Canterbury; and, being zealous for the propagation of her religion, ſhe had been very aſſiduous in her devotional exerciſes, had ſupported the credit of her faith by an irreproachable conduct, and had employed every art of inſinuation and addreſs to reconcile her huſband to her religious principles. Her popularity in the court, and her influence over Ethelbert, had ſo well paved the way for the reception of the Chriſtian doctrine, that Gregory, ſurnamed the Great, then Roman pontiff, began to entertain hopes of effecting a project, which he himſelf, before he mounted the papal throne, had once embraced, of converting the Britiſh Saxons.

It happened that this prelate, at that time in a private ſtation, had obſerved in the market place of Rome ſome Saxon youth expoſed to ſale, whom the Roman merchants, in their trading voyages to Britain, had bought of their mercenary parents. Struck with the beauty of their fair complexions and blooming countenances, Gregory aſked to what country they belonged; and, being told they were Angles, he replied that they ought more properly to be denominated angels: it were a pity that the prince of darkneſs ſhould enjoy ſo fair a prey, and that ſo beautiful a frontiſpiece

ſhould cover a mind deſtitute of internal grace and righteouſneſs. Inquiring farther concerning the name of their province, he was informed that it was Deïri, a diſtrict of Northumberland. 'Deïri!' replied he, 'that is good! They are called to the mercy of God from his anger (de ira). But what is the name of the king of that province?' He was told it was Ælla or Alla. 'Alleluia!' cried he, 'We muſt endeavour that the praiſes of God be ſung in their country.' Moved by theſe alluſions, which appeared to him ſo happy, he determined to undertake, himſelf, a miſſion into Britain; and, having obtained the pope's approbation, he prepared for that perilous journey. But his popularity at home was ſo great, that the Romans, unwilling to expoſe him to ſuch dangers, oppoſed his deſign; and he was obliged, for the preſent, to lay aſide all farther thoughts of executing that pious purpoſe.[k]

The controverſy between the pagans and the Chriſtians was not entirely cooled in that age; and no pontiff, before Gregory, had ever carried to greater exceſs an intemperate zeal againſt the former religion. He had waged war with all the precious monuments of the ancients, and even with their writings; which, as appears from the ſtrain of his own wit, as well as from the ſtyle of his compoſitions, he had not taſte or genius ſufficient to comprehend. Ambitious to diſtinguiſh his pontificate by the converſion of the Britiſh Saxons, he pitched on Auguſtine, a Roman monk, and ſent him with forty aſſociates to preach the goſpel in this iſland. Theſe miſſionaries, terrified with the dangers which might attend their propoſing a new doctrine to ſo fierce a people, of whoſe language they were ignorant, ſtopped ſome time in France; and ſent back Auguſtine to lay the hazards and difficulties before the pope, and crave his permiſſion to deſiſt from the undertaking. But Gregory exhorted them to perſevere in their purpoſe; adviſed them to chooſe ſome interpreters from among the Franks, who ſtill ſpoke the ſame language with the

Saxons;[l] and recommended them to the good offices of queen Brunehaut, who had at this time uſurped the ſovereign power in France. This princeſs, though ſtained with every vice of treachery and cruelty, either poſſeſſed or pretended great zeal for the cauſe; and Gregory acknowledged that to her friendly aſſiſtance was, in a great meaſure, owing the ſucceſs of that undertaking.[m]

Auguſtine, on his arrival in Kent, in the year 597,[n] found the danger much leſs than he had apprehended. Ethelbert, already well diſpoſed towards the Chriſtian faith, aſſigned him a habitation in the Iſle of Thanet; and ſoon after admitted him to a conference. Apprehenſive, however, leſt ſpells or enchantments might be employed againſt him by prieſts, who brought an unknown worſhip from a diſtant country, he had the precaution to receive them in the open air, where he believed the force of their magic would be more eaſily diſſipated.[o] Here Auguſtine, by means of his interpreters, delivered to him the tenets of the Chriſtian faith; and promiſed him eternal joys above, and a kingdom in heaven without end, if he would be perſuaded to receive that ſalutary doctrine. 'Your[p] words and promiſes,' replied Ethelbert, 'are fair; but, becauſe they are new and uncertain, I cannot entirely yield to them, and relinquiſh the principles which I and my anceſtors have ſo long maintained. You are welcome, however, to remain here in peace; and, as you have undertaken ſo long a journey ſolely, as it appears, for what you believe to be for our advantage, I will ſupply you with all neceſſaries, and permit you to deliver your doctrine to my[q] ſubjects.'

Auguſtine, encouraged by this favourable reception, and ſeeing now a proſpect of ſucceſs, proceeded with redoubled zeal to preach the goſpel to the Kentiſh Saxons. He attracted their attention by the auſterity of his manners, by the ſevere penances to which he ſubjected himſelf, by the abſtinence and ſelf-denial which he practiſed: and, having excited their wonder by a courſe

S^t AUGUSTINE BEFORE ETHELBERT.

W. Evans pinx^t

Published by R. Evans Pall-Mall 1806 as the Act directs

T. Smith sculp^t

of life which appeared ſo contrary to nature, he procured more eaſily their belief of miracles, which it was pretended he wrought for their converſion.[r] Influenced by theſe motives, and by the declared favour of the court, numbers of the Kentiſh men were baptized; and the king himſelf was perſuaded to ſubmit to that rite of Chriſtianity. His example had great influence with his ſubjects; but he employed no force to bring them over to the new doctrine. Auguſtine thought proper, in the commencement of his miſſion, to aſſume the appearance of the greateſt lenity: he told Ethelbert that the ſervice of Chriſt muſt be entirely voluntary, and that no violence ought ever to be uſed in propagating ſo ſalutary a doctrine.[s]

The intelligence received of theſe ſpiritual conqueſts afforded great joy to the Romans; who now exulted as much in thoſe peaceful trophies as their anceſtors had ever done in their moſt ſanguinary triumphs and moſt ſplendid victories. Gregory wrote a letter to Ethelbert; in which, after informing him that the end of the world was approaching, he exhorted him to diſplay his zeal in the converſion of his ſubjects, to exert rigour againſt the worſhip of idols, and to build up the good work of holineſs by every expedient of exhortation, terror, blandiſhment, or correction:[t] a doctrine more ſuitable to that age, and to the uſual papal maxims, than the tolerating principles which Auguſtine had thought it prudent to inculcate. The pontiff alſo anſwered ſome queſtions, which the miſſionary had put, concerning the government of the new church of Kent. Beſides other queries, which it is not material here to relate, Auguſtine aſked 'Whether couſin-germans might be allowed to marry?' Gregory anſwered that that liberty had indeed been formerly granted by the Roman law; but that experience had ſhewn that no iſſue could ever come from ſuch marriages: and he therefore prohibited them. Auguſtine aſked 'Whether a woman pregnant might be baptized?'

Gregory anſwered that he ſaw no objection. 'How ſoon after the birth the child might receive baptiſm?' It was anſwered, 'Immediately, if neceſſary.' 'How ſoon a huſband might have commerce with his wife after her delivery?' 'Not till ſhe had given ſuck to her child;' a practice to which Gregory exhorts all women. 'How ſoon a man might enter the church, or receive the ſacrament, after having had commerce with his wife?' It was replied that, unleſs he had approached her without deſire, merely for the ſake of propagating his ſpecies, he was not without ſin: but in all caſes it was requiſite for him, before he entered the church, or communicated, to purge himſelf by prayer and ablution; and he ought not, even after uſing theſe precautions, to participate immediately of the ſacred duties.[u] There are ſome other queſtions and replies ſtill more indecent and more ridiculous.[w] And, on the whole, it appears that Gregory and his miſſionary, if ſympathy of manners have any influence, were better calculated than men of more refined underſtandings for making a progreſs with the ignorant and barbarous Saxons.

The more to facilitate the reception of Chriſtianity, Gregory enjoined Auguſtine to remove the idols from the heathen altars, but not to deſtroy the altars themſelves; becauſe the people, he ſaid, would be allured to frequent the Chriſtian worſhip when they found it celebrated in a place which they were accuſtomed to revere. And, as the pagans practiſed ſacrifices, and feaſted with the prieſts on their offerings, he alſo exhorted the miſſionary to perſuade them, on Chriſtian feſtivals, to kill their cattle in the neighbourhood of the church, and to indulge themſelves in thoſe cheerful entertainments to which they had been habituated.[x] Theſe political compliances ſhew that, notwithſtanding his ignorance and prejudices, he was not unacquainted with the arts of governing mankind. Auguſtine was conſecrated archbiſhop of Canterbury; was endowed by Gregory with authority

over all the Britiſh churches; and received the pall, a badge of eccleſiaſtical honour, from Rome.[y] Gregory alſo adviſed him not to be too much elated with his gift of working miracles;[z] and, as Auguſtine, proud with the ſucceſs of his miſſion, ſeemed to think himſelf entitled to extend his authority over the biſhops of Gaul, the pope informed him that they lay entirely without the bounds of his juriſdiction.[a]

The marriage of Ethelbert with Bertha, and much more his embracing Chriſtianity, begat a connexion of his ſubjects with the French, Italians, and other nations on the continent; and tended to reclaim them from their groſs ignorance and barbarity, in which all the Saxon tribes had been hitherto [b] involved. Ethelbert alſo enacted,[c] with the conſent of the ſtates of his kingdom, a body of laws; the firſt written laws promulgated by any of the northern conquerors: and his reign was in every reſpect glorious to himſelf, and beneficial to his people. He governed the kingdom of Kent fifty years; and, dying in 616, left the ſucceſſion to his ſon Eadbald. This prince, ſeduced by a paſſion for his mother-in-law, deſerted for ſome time the Chriſtian faith, which permitted not theſe inceſtuous marriages. His whole people immediately returned with him to idolatry. Laurentius, the ſucceſſor of Auguſtine, found the Chriſtian worſhip wholly abandoned; and was prepared to return to France, in order to eſcape the mortification of preaching the goſpel without fruit to the infidels. Mellitus and Juſtus, who had been conſecrated biſhops of London and Rocheſter, had already departed the kingdom;[d] when Laurentius, before he ſhould entirely abandon his dignity, made one effort to reclaim the king. He appeared before that prince; and, throwing off his veſtments, ſhewed his body all torn with bruiſes and ſtripes, which he had received. Eadbald, wondering that any man ſhould have dared to treat in that manner a perſon of his rank, was told by Lau-

rentius that he had received this chaſtiſement from St. Peter, the prince of the apoſtles; who had appeared to him in a viſion, and, ſeverely reproving him for his intention to deſert his charge, had inflicted on him theſe viſible marks of his diſpleaſure.[e] Whether Eadbald was ſtruck with the miracle, or influenced by ſome other motive, he divorced himſelf from his mother-in-law, and returned to the profeſſion of Chriſtianity.[f] His whole people returned with him. Eadbald reached not the fame or authority of his father, and died in 640, after a reign of twenty-five years; leaving two ſons, Erminfrid and Ercombert.

Ercombert, though the younger ſon by Emma, a French princeſs, found means to mount the throne. He is celebrated by Bede for two exploits; for eſtabliſhing the faſt of Lent in his kingdom, and for utterly extirpating idolatry; which, notwithſtanding the prevalence of Chriſtianity, had hitherto been tolerated by the two preceding monarchs. He reigned twenty-four years; and left the crown to Egbert his ſon, who reigned nine years. This prince is renowned for his encouragement of learning; but infamous for putting to death his two couſin-germans, ſons of Erminfrid his uncle. The eccleſiaſtical writers praiſe him for his beſtowing on his ſiſter Dŏmnona ſome lands in the Iſle of Thanet, where ſhe founded a monaſtery.

The bloody precaution of Egbert could not fix the crown on the head of his ſon Edric. Lothaire, brother of the deceaſed prince, took poſſeſſion of the kingdom; and, in order to ſecure the power in his family, he aſſociated with him Richard his ſon in the adminiſtration of the government. Edric, the diſpoſſeſſed prince, had recourſe to Edilwach, king of Suſſex, for aſſiſtance; and, being ſupported by that prince, fought a battle with his uncle, who was defeated and ſlain. Richard fled into Germany; and afterwards died in Lucca, a city of Tuſcany. William of Malmeſbury aſcribes Lothaire's bad fortune to two crimes; his

concurrence in the murder of his couſins, and his contempt for reliques.[g]

Lothaire reigned eleven years, Edric his ſucceſſor only two. Upon the death of the latter, which happened in 686, Widred his brother obtained poſſeſſion of the crown: but, as the ſucceſſion had been of late ſo much disjointed by revolutions and uſurpations, faction began to prevail among the nobility; which invited Cedwalla, king of Weſſex, with his brother Mollo, to attack the kingdom. Theſe invaders committed great devaſtations in Kent; but the death of Mollo, who was ſlain in a ſkirmiſh,[h] gave a ſhort breathing time to that kingdom. Widred reſtored the affairs of Kent; and, after a reign of thirty-two years,[i] left the crown to his poſterity. Eadbert, Ethelbert, and Alric, his deſcendants, ſucceſſively mounted the throne. After the death of the laſt, which happened in 794, the royal family of Kent was extinguiſhed; and every factious leader, who could entertain hopes of aſcending the throne, threw the ſtate into confuſion. Egbert,[k] who firſt ſucceeded, reigned but two years; Cuthred, brother to the king of Mercia, ſix years; Baldred, an illegitimate branch of the royal family, eighteen; and, after a troubleſome and precarious reign, he was, in the year 823, expelled by Egbert, king of Weſſex, who diſſolved the Saxon Heptarchy, and united the ſeveral kingdoms under his dominion.

THE KINGDOM OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

Adelfrid, king of Bernicia, having married Acca, the daughter of Ælla, king of Deïri, and expelled her infant brother Edwin, had united all the counties north of Humber into one monarchy, and acquired a great aſcendant in the Heptarchy. He alſo ſpread the terror of the Saxon arms to the neighbouring people; and,

by his victories over the Scots and Picts, as well as Welſh, extended on all ſides the bounds of his dominions. Having laid ſiege to Cheſter, the Britons marched out with all their forces to engage him; and they were attended by a body of twelve hundred and fifty monks from the monaſtery of Bangor, who ſtood at a ſmall diſtance from the field of battle, in order to encourage the combatants by their preſence and exhortations. Adelfrid, inquiring the purpoſe of this unuſual appearance, was told that theſe prieſts had come to pray againſt him. 'Then are they as much our enemies,' ſaid he, 'as thoſe who intend to fight againſt [1] us.' And he immediately ſent a detachment, who fell upon them, and did ſuch execution, that only fifty eſcaped with their lives.[m] The Britons, aſtoniſhed at this event, received a total defeat. Cheſter was obliged to ſurrender. And Adelfrid, purſuing his victory, made himſelf maſter of Bangor, and entirely demoliſhed the monaſtery; a building ſo extenſive, that there was a mile's diſtance from one gate of it to another; and it contained two thouſand one hundred monks, who are ſaid to have been there maintained by their own labour.[n]

Notwithſtanding Adelfrid's ſucceſs in war, he lived in inquietude on account of young Edwin, whom he had unjuſtly diſpoſſeſſed of the crown of Deïri. This prince, now grown to man's eſtate, wandered from place to place in continual danger from the attempts of Adelfrid; and received at laſt protection in the court of Redwald, king of the Eaſt Angles; where his engaging and gallant deportment procured him general eſteem and affection. Redwald, however, was ſtrongly ſolicited by the king of Northumberland to kill or deliver up his gueſt: rich preſents were promiſed him if he would comply, and war denounced againſt him in caſe of his refuſal. After rejecting ſeveral meſſages of this kind, his generoſity began to yield to the motives of intereſt; and he retained the laſt ambaſſador till he

ſhould come to a reſolution in a caſe of ſuch importance. Edwin, informed of his friend's perplexity, was yet determined, at all hazards, to remain in Eaſt Anglia; and thought that, if the protection of that court failed him, it were better to die than prolong a life ſo much expoſed to the perſecutions of his powerful rival. This confidence in Redwald's honour and friendſhip, with his other accompliſhments, engaged the queen on his ſide; and ſhe effectually repreſented to her huſband the infamy of delivering up to certain deſtruction their royal gueſt, who had fled to them for protection againſt his cruel and jealous enemies.[o] Redwald, embracing more generous reſolutions, thought it ſafeſt to prevent Adelfrid before that prince was aware of his intention, and to attack him while he was yet unprepared for defence. He marched ſuddenly with an army into the kingdom of Northumberland, and fought a battle with Adelfrid; in which that monarch was defeated and killed, after avenging himſelf by the death of Regner, ſon of Redwald.[p] His own ſons, Eanfrid, Oſwald, and Oſwy, yet infants, were carried into Scotland; and Edwin obtained poſſeſſion of the crown of Northumberland.

Edwin was the greateſt prince of the Heptarchy in that age; and diſtinguiſhed himſelf, both by his influence over the other kingdoms,[q] and by the ſtrict execution of juſtice in his own dominions. He reclaimed his ſubjects from the licentious life to which they had been accuſtomed; and it was a common ſaying that, during his reign, a woman or child might openly carry every where a purſe of gold without any danger of violence or robbery. There is a remarkable inſtance tranſmitted to us of the affection born him by his ſervants. Cuichelme, king of Weſſex, was his enemy; but, finding himſelf unable to maintain open war againſt ſo gallant and powerful a prince, he determined to uſe treachery againſt him, and he employed one Eumer for that criminal purpoſe. The aſſaſſin, having obtained admittance by

pretending to deliver a meſſage from Cuichelme, drew his dagger, and ruſhed upon the king. Lilla, an officer of his army, ſeeing his maſter's danger, and having no other means of defence, interpoſed with his own body between the king and Eumer's dagger; which was puſhed with ſuch violence that, after piercing Lilla, it even wounded Edwin: but, before the aſſaſſin could renew his blow, he was diſpatched by the king's attendants.

The Eaſt Angles conſpired againſt Redwald, their king; and, having put him to death, they offered their crown to Edwin, of whoſe valour and capacity they had had experience while he reſided among them. But Edwin, from a ſenſe of gratitude towards his benefactor, obliged them to ſubmit to Earpwold, the ſon of Redwald; and that prince preſerved his authority, though on a precarious footing, under the protection of the Northumbrian monarch.[r]

Edwin, after his acceſſion to the crown, married Ethelburga, the daughter of Ethelbert, king of Kent. This princeſs, emulating the glory of her mother Bertha, who had been the inſtrument for converting her huſband and his people to Chriſtianity, carried Paullinus, a learned biſhop, along with her;[s] and, beſides ſtipulating a toleration for the exerciſe of her own religion, which was readily granted her, ſhe uſed every reaſon to perſuade the king to embrace it. Edwin, like a prudent prince, heſitated on the propoſal: but promiſed to examine the foundations of that doctrine; and declared that, if he found them ſatisfactory, he was willing to be converted.[t] Accordingly he held ſeveral conferences with Paullinus; canvaſſed the arguments propounded with the wiſeſt of his counſellors; retired frequently from company, in order to revolve alone that important queſtion; and, after a ſerious and long inquiry, declared in favour of the Chriſtian religion.[u] The people ſoon after imitated his example. Beſides the authority and influence of the king, they were moved

by another ſtriking example. Coifi, the high-prieſt, being converted after a public conference with Paullinus, led the way in deſtroying the images which he had ſo long worſhipped, and was forward in making this atonement for his paſt idolatry.[w]

This able prince periſhed, with his ſon Osfrid, in a great battle which he fought againſt Penda, king of Mercia, and Cædwalla, king of the Britons.[x] That event, which happened in the forty-eighth year of Edwin's age [y] and ſeventeenth of his reign, divided the monarchy of Northumberland, which that prince had united in his perſon. Eanfrid, the ſon of Adelfrid, returned, with his brothers Oſwald and Oſwy, from Scotland, and took poſſeſſion of Bernicia, his paternal kingdom. Oſric, Edwin's couſin-german, eſtabliſhed himſelf in Deïri, the inheritance of his family; but to which the ſons of Edwin had a preferable title. Eanfrid, the elder ſurviving ſon, fled to Penda, by whom he was treacherouſly ſlain. The younger ſon, Vuſcfræa, with Yffi, the grandſon of Edwin by Osfrid, ſought protection in Kent; and, not finding themſelves in ſafety there, retired into France to king Dagobert, where they died.[z]

Oſric, king of Deïri, and Eanfrid of Bernicia, returned to paganiſm, and the whole people ſeem to have returned with them; ſince Paullinus, who was the firſt archbiſhop of York, and who had converted them, thought proper to retire with Ethelburga, the queen dowager, into Kent. Both theſe Northumbrian kings periſhed ſoon after; the firſt in battle againſt Cædwalla the Briton, the ſecond by the treachery of that prince. Oſwald, the brother of Eanfrid, of the race of Bernicia, united again the kingdom of Northumberland in the year 634, and reſtored the Chriſtian religion in his dominions. He gained a bloody and well diſputed battle againſt Cædwalla; the laſt vigorous effort which the Britons made againſt the Saxons. Oſwald is much celebrated for his ſanctity and charity by the monkiſh hiſtorians; and they pretend

that his reliques wrought miracles, particularly the curing of a ſick horſe, which had approached the place of his interment.[a]

He died in battle againſt Penda, king of Mercia, and was ſucceeded by his brother Oſwy; who eſtabliſhed himſelf in the government of the whole Northumbrian kingdom by putting to death Oſwin, the ſon of Oſric, the laſt king of the race of Deïri. His ſon Egfrid ſucceeded him; who periſhed in battle againſt the Picts, without leaving any children, becauſe Adelthrid, his wife, refuſed to violate her vow of chaſtity. Alfred, his natural brother, acquired poſſeſſion of the kingdom, which he governed for nineteen years; and he left it to Oſred his ſon, a boy of eight years of age. This prince, after a reign of eleven years, was murdered by Kenred his kinſman; who, after enjoying the crown only a year, periſhed by a like fate. Oſric, and after him Celwulph the ſon of Kenred, next mounted the throne; which the latter relinquiſhed in the year 738, in favour of Eadbert his couſin-german; who, imitating his predeceſſor, abdicated the crown, and retired into a monaſtery. Oſwolf, ſon of Eadbert, was ſlain in a ſedition a year after his acceſſion to the crown; and Mollo, who was not of the royal family, ſeized the crown. He periſhed by the treachery of Ailred, a prince of the blood; and Ailred, having ſucceeded in his deſign upon the throne, was ſoon after expelled by his ſubjects. Ethelred, his ſucceſſor, the ſon of Mollo, underwent a like fate. Celwold, the next king, the brother of Ailred, was depoſed and ſlain by the people; and his place was filled by Oſred his nephew; who, after a ſhort reign of a year, made way for Ethelbert, another ſon of Mollo, whoſe death was equally tragical with that of almoſt all his predeceſſors. After Ethelbert's death an univerſal anarchy prevailed in Northumberland; and the people, having, by ſo many fatal revolutions, loſt all attachment to their government and princes, were well prepared for ſubjection to a foreign yoke; which Egbert, king of Weſſex, finally impoſed upon them.

THE KINGDOM OF EAST ANGLIA.

THE hiſtory of this kingdom contains nothing memorable, except the converſion of Earpwold, the fourth king, and great-grandſon of Uffa, the founder of the monarchy. The authority of Edwin, king of Northumberland, on whom that prince entirely depended, engaged him to take this ſtep: but ſoon after his wife, who was an idolatreſs, brought him back to her religion; and he was found unable to reſiſt thoſe allurements which had ſeduced the wiſeſt of mankind. After his death, which was violent, like that of moſt of the Saxon princes that did not early retire into monaſteries, Sigebert, his ſucceſſor and half-brother, who had been educated in France, reſtored Chriſtianity, and introduced learning, among the Eaſt Angles. Some pretend that he founded the univerſity of Cambridge, or rather ſome ſchools in that place. It is almoſt impoſſible, and quite needleſs, to be more particular in relating the tranſactions of the Eaſt Angles. What inſtruction or entertainment can it give the reader to hear a long bead-roll of barbarous names; Egric, Annas, Ethelbert, Ethelwald, Aldulf, Elfwold, Beorne, Ethelred, Ethelbert; who ſucceſſively murdered, expelled, or inherited from each other, and obſcurely filled the throne of that kingdom? Ethelbert, the laſt of theſe princes, was treacherouſly murdered by Offa, king of Mercia, in the year 792; and his ſtate was thenceforth united with that of Offa, as we ſhall relate preſently.

THE KINGDOM OF MERCIA.

MERCIA, the largeſt, if not the moſt powerful, kingdom of the Heptarchy, comprehended all the middle counties of England; and, as its frontiers extended to thoſe of all the other ſix king-

doms as well as to Wales, it received its name from that circumſtance. Webba, the ſon of Crida, founder of the monarchy, being placed on the throne by Ethelbert, king of Kent, governed his paternal dominions by a precarious authority; and, after his death, Ceorl his kinſman was, by the influence of the Kentiſh monarch, preferred to his ſon Penda, whoſe turbulent character appeared dangerous to that prince. Penda was thus fifty years of age before he mounted the throne; and his temerity and reſtleſs diſpoſition were found nowiſe abated by time, experience, or reflection. He engaged in continual hoſtilities againſt all the neighbouring ſtates; and, by his injuſtice and violence, rendered himſelf equally odious to his own ſubjects and to ſtrangers. Sigebert, Egric, and Annas, three kings of Eaſt Anglia, periſhed ſucceſſively in battle againſt him; as did alſo Edwin and Oſwald, the two greateſt princes that had reigned over Northumberland. At laſt Oſwy, brother to Oſwald, having defeated and ſlain him in a deciſive battle, freed the world from this ſanguinary tyrant. Peada his ſon mounted the throne of Mercia in 655, and lived under the protection of Oſwy, whoſe daughter he had eſpouſed. This princeſs was educated in the Chriſtian faith, and ſhe employed her influence with ſucceſs in converting her huſband and his ſubjects to that religion. Thus the fair ſex have had the merit of introducing the Chriſtian doctrine into all the moſt conſiderable kingdoms of the Saxon Heptarchy. Peada died a violent death.[b] His ſon Wolfhere ſucceeded to the government: and, after having reduced to dependance the kingdoms of Eſſex and Eaſt Anglia, he left the crown to his brother Ethelred; who, though a lover of peace, ſhewed himſelf not unfit for military enterpriſes. Beſides making a ſucceſsful expedition into Kent, he repulſed Egfrid, king of Northumberland, who had invaded his dominions; and he ſlew in battle Elfwin, the brother of that prince. Deſirous, however, of compoſing all animoſities with

Egfrid, he paid him a ſum of money as a compenſation for the loſs of his brother. After a proſperous reign of thirty years he reſigned the crown to Kendred, ſon of Wolfhere, and retired into the monaſtery of Bardney.[c] Kendred returned the preſent of the crown to Ceolred, the ſon of Ethelred; and, making a pilgrimage to Rome, paſſed his life there in penance and devotion. The place of Ceolred was ſupplied by Ethelbald, great-grand-nephew to Penda by Alwy his brother; and this prince, being ſlain in a mutiny, was ſucceeded by Offa, who was a degree more remote from Penda by Eawa another brother.

This prince, who mounted the throne in 755,[d] had ſome great qualities, and was ſucceſsful in his warlike enterpriſes againſt Lothaire, king of Kent, and Kenwulph, king of Weſſex. He defeated the former in a bloody battle at Otford upon the Darent, and reduced his kingdom to a ſtate of dependance. He gained a victory over the latter at Benſington in Oxfordſhire; and, conquering that county, together with that of Glocester, annexed both to his dominions. But all theſe ſucceſſes were ſtained by his treacherous murder of Ethelbert, king of the Eaſt Angles, and his violent ſeizing of that kingdom. This young prince, who is ſaid to have poſſeſſed great merit, had paid his addreſſes to Elfrida, the daughter of Offa; and was invited, with all his retinue, to Hereford, in order to ſolemnize the nuptials. Amidſt the joy and feſtivity of theſe entertainments he was ſeized by Offa, and ſecretly beheaded: and, though Elfrida, who abhorred her father's treachery, had time to give warning to the Eaſt Anglian nobility, who eſcaped into their own country, Offa, having extinguiſhed the royal family, ſucceeded in his deſign of ſubduing that kingdom.[e] The perfidious prince, deſirous of reeſtabliſhing his character in the world, and perhaps of appeaſing the remorſes of his own conſcience, paid great court to the clergy, and practiſed all the monkiſh devotion ſo much eſteemed

in that ignorant and ſuperſtitious age. He gave the tenth of his goods to the church;[f] beſtowed rich donations on the cathedral of Hereford; and even made a pilgrimage to Rome, where his great power and riches could not fail of procuring him the papal abſolution. The better to ingratiate himſelf with the ſovereign pontiff, he engaged to pay him a yearly donation for the ſupport of an Engliſh college at Rome;[g] and, in order to raiſe the ſum, he impoſed the tax of a penny on each houſe poſſeſſed of thirty pence a year. This impoſition, being afterwards levied on all England, was commonly denominated Peter's pence;[h] and, though conferred at firſt as a gift, was afterwards claimed as a tribute by the Roman pontiff. Carrying his hypocriſy ſtill farther, Offa, feigning to be directed by a viſion from heaven, diſcovered at Verulam the reliques of St. Alban the martyr, and endowed a magnificent monaſtery in that place.[i] Moved by all theſe acts of piety, Malmeſbury, one of the beſt of the old Engliſh hiſtorians, declares himſelf at a loſs [k] to determine whether the merits or crimes of this prince preponderated. Offa died, after a reign of thirty-nine years, in 794.[l]

This prince was become ſo conſiderable in the Heptarchy, that the emperor Charlemagne entered into an alliance and friendſhip with him; a circumſtance which did honour to Offa, as diſtant princes at that time had uſually little communication with each other. That emperor being a great lover of learning and learned men, in an age very barren of that ornament, Offa, at his deſire, ſent him over Alcuin, a clergyman much celebrated for his knowledge; who received great honours from Charlemagne, and even became his preceptor in the ſciences. The chief reaſon, why he had at firſt deſired the company of Alcuin, was that he might oppoſe his learning to the hereſy of Felix, biſhop of Urgil in Catalonia; who maintained that Jeſus Chriſt, conſidered in his human nature, could more properly be denominated the adop-

tive than the natural Son of God.[m] This hereſy was condemned in the council of Francfort, held in 794, and conſiſting of three hundred biſhops. Such were the queſtions which were agitated in that age, and which employed the attention not only of cloiſtered ſcholars, but of the wiſeſt and greateſt princes.[n]

Egfrith ſucceeded to his father Offa, but ſurvived him only five months;[o] when he made way for Kenulph, a deſcendant of the royal family. This prince waged war againſt Kent; and, taking Egbert the king priſoner, he cut off his hands and put out his eyes; leaving Cuthred, his own brother, in poſſeſſion of the crown of that kingdom. Kenulph was killed in an inſurrection of the Eaſt Anglians, whoſe crown his predeceſſor Offa had uſurped. He left his ſon Kenelm a minor; who was murdered the ſame year by his ſiſter Quendrade, who had entertained the ambitious views of aſſuming the government.[p] But ſhe was ſupplanted by her uncle Ceolulf; who, two years after, was dethroned by Beornulf. The reign of this uſurper, who was not of the royal family, was ſhort and unfortunate: he was defeated by the Weſt Saxons, and killed by his own ſubjects, the Eaſt Angles.[q] Ludican, his ſucceſſor, underwent the ſame fate;[r] and Wiglaff, who mounted this unſtable throne, and found every thing in the utmoſt confuſion, could not withſtand the fortune of Egbert, who united all the Saxon kingdoms into one great monarchy.

THE KINGDOM OF ESSEX.

This kingdom made no great figure in the Heptarchy; and the hiſtory of it is very imperfect. Sleda ſucceeded to his father Erkinwin, the founder of the monarchy; and made way for his ſon Sebert; who, being nephew to Ethelbert, king of Kent, was perſuaded by that prince to embrace the Chriſtian faith.[s] His

ſons and conjunct ſucceſſors, Sexted and Seward, relapſed into idolatry, and were ſoon after ſlain in a battle againſt the Weſt Saxons. To ſhew the rude manner of living in that age, Bede tells us 'that theſe two kings expreſſed great deſire to eat the white bread diſtributed by Mellitus, the biſhop, at the communion:" but, on his refuſing them unleſs they would ſubmit to be baptized, they expelled him their dominions. The names of the other princes, who reigned ſucceſſively in Eſſex, are Sigebert the little, Sigebert the good, who reſtored Chriſtianity, Swithelm, Sigheri, Offa. This laſt prince, having made a vow of chaſtity, notwithſtanding his marriage with Keneſwitha, a Mercian princeſs, daughter to Penda, went in pilgrimage to Rome, and ſhut himſelf up during the reſt of his life in a cloiſter. Selred, his ſucceſſor, reigned thirty-eight years; and was the laſt of the royal line: the failure of which threw the kingdom into great confuſion, and reduced it to dependance under Mercia. Switherd firſt acquired the crown by the conceſſion of the Mercian princes; and his death made way for Sigeric, who ended his life in a pilgrimage to Rome. His ſucceſſor Sigered, unable to defend his kingdom, ſubmitted to the victorious arms of Egbert.

THE KINGDOM OF SUSSEX.

The hiſtory of this kingdom, the ſmalleſt in the Heptarchy, is ſtill more imperfect than that of Eſſex. Ælla, the founder of the monarchy, left the crown to his ſon Ciſſa, who is chiefly remarkable for his long reign of ſeventy-ſix years. During his time the South Saxons fell almoſt into a total dependance on the kingdom of Weſſex; and we ſcarcely know the names of the princes who were poſſeſſed of this titular ſovereignty. Adelwalch, the laſt of them, was ſubdued in battle by Ceadwalla, king of Weſſex, and

was ſlain in the action, leaving two infant ſons; who, falling into the hand of the conqueror, were murdered by him. The abbot of Retford oppoſed the order for this execution; but could only prevail on Ceadwalla to ſuſpend it till they ſhould be baptized. Berćthun and Audhun, two noblemen of character, reſiſted ſome time the violence of the Weſt Saxons; but their oppoſition ſerved only to prolong the miſeries of their country; and the ſubduing of this kingdom was the firſt ſtep which the Weſt Saxons made towards acquiring the ſole monarchy of England.[x]

THE KINGDOM OF WESSEX.

THE kingdom of Weſſex, which finally ſwallowed up all the other Saxon ſtates, met with great reſiſtance on its firſt eſtabliſhment: and the Britons, who were now inured to arms, yielded not tamely their poſſeſſions to thoſe invaders. Cerdic, the founder of the monarchy, and his ſon Kenric, fought many ſucceſsful and ſome unſucceſsful battles againſt the natives; and the martial ſpirit, common to all the Saxons, was, by means of theſe hoſtilities, carried to the greateſt height among this tribe. Ceaulin, who was the ſon and ſucceſſor of Kenric, and who began his reign in 560, was ſtill more ambitious and enterpriſing than his predeceſſors; and, by waging continual war againſt the Britons, he added a great part of the counties of Devon and Somerſet to his other dominions. Carried along by the tide of ſucceſs, he invaded the other Saxon ſtates in his neighbourhood; and, becoming terrible to all, he provoked a general confederacy againſt him. This alliance proved ſucceſsful under the conduct of Ethelbert, king of Kent; and Ceaulin, who had loſt the affections of his own ſubjects by his violent diſpoſition, and had now fallen into contempt from his misfortunes, was expelled the throne,[y] and died in exile

and misery. Cuichelme and Cuthwin, his sons, governed jointly the kingdom, till the expulsion of the latter in 591, and the death of the former in 593, made way for Cealric; to whom succeeded Ceobald in 593; by whose death, which happened in 611, Kynegils inherited the crown. This prince embraced [z] Christianity through the persuasion of Oswald, king of Northumberland, who had married his daughter, and who had attained a great ascendant in the Heptarchy. Kenwalch next succeeded to the monarchy; and, dying in 672, left the succession so much disputed, that Sexburga his widow, a woman of spirit,[a] kept possession of the government till her death, which happened two years after. Escwin then peaceably acquired the crown; and, after a short reign of two years, made way for Kentwin, who governed nine years. Ceodwalla, his successor, mounted not the throne without opposition; but proved a great prince, according to the ideas of those times; that is, he was enterprising, warlike, and successful. He entirely subdued the kingdom of Sussex, and annexed it to his own dominions. He made inroads into Kent; but met with resistance from Widred the king, who proved successful against Mollo, brother to Ceodwalla, and slew him in a skirmish. Ceodwalla at last, tired with wars and bloodshed, was seized with a fit of devotion; bestowed several endowments on the church; and made a pilgrimage to Rome, where he received baptism, and died in 689. Ina, his successor, inherited the military virtues of Ceodwalla; and added to them the more valuable ones of justice, policy, and prudence. He made war upon the Britons in Somerset; and, having finally subdued that province, he treated the vanquished with a humanity hitherto unknown to the Saxon conquerors. He allowed the proprietors to retain possession of their lands, encouraged marriages and alliances between them and his ancient subjects, and gave them the privilege of being governed by the same laws. These laws he aug-

mented and aſcertained; and, though he was diſturbed by ſome inſurrections at home, his long reign of thirty-ſeven years may be regarded as one of the moſt glorious and moſt proſperous of the Heptarchy. In the decline of his age he made a pilgrimage to Rome; and, after his return, ſhut himſelf up in a cloiſter, where he died.

Though the kings of Weſſex had always been princes of the blood, deſcended from Cerdic, the founder of the monarchy, the order of ſucceſſion had been far from exact; and a more remote prince had often found means to mount the throne, in preference to one deſcended from a nearer branch of the royal family. Ina, therefore, having no children of his own, and lying much under the influence of Ethelburga his queen, left by will the ſucceſſion to Adelard her brother, who was his remote kinſman. But this deſtination did not take place without ſome difficulty. Oſwald, a prince more nearly allied to the crown, took arms againſt Adelard; but, he being ſuppreſſed, and dying ſoon after, the title of Adelard was not any farther diſputed; and in the year 741 he was ſucceeded by his couſin Cudred. The reign of this prince was diſtinguiſhed by a great victory which he obtained, by means of Edelhun his general, over Ethelbald, king of Mercia. His death made way for Sigebert, his kinſman; who governed ſo ill that his people roſe in an inſurrection, and dethroned him, crowning Cenulph in his ſtead. The exiled prince found a refuge with duke Cumbran, governor of Hampſhire; who, that he might add new obligations to Sigebert, gave him many ſalutary counſels for his future conduct, accompanied with ſome reprehenſions for the paſt. But theſe were ſo much reſented by the ungrateful prince that he conſpired againſt the life of his protector, and treacherouſly murdered him. After this infamous action he was forſaken by all the world; and, ſculking about in the wilds and foreſts, was at laſt diſcovered

by a ſervant of Cumbran's, who inſtantly took revenge upon him for the murder of his maſter.[b]

Cenulph, who had obtained the crown on the expulſion of Sigebert, was fortunate in many expeditions againſt the Britons of Cornwall; but afterwards loſt ſome reputation by his ill ſucceſs againſt Offa, king of Mercia.[c] Kynehard alſo, brother to the depoſed Sigebert, gave him diſturbance; and, though expelled the kingdom, he hovered on the frontiers, and watched an opportunity for attacking his rival. The king had an intrigue with a young woman who lived at Merton in Surrey, whither having ſecretly retired, he was on a ſudden environed, in the night time, by Kynehard and his followers; and, after making a vigorous reſiſtance, was murdered, with all his attendants. The nobility and people of the neighbourhood, riſing next day in arms, took revenge on Kynehard for the ſlaughter of their king, and put every one to the ſword who had been engaged in that criminal enterpriſe. This event happened in 784.

Brithric next obtained poſſeſſion of the government, though remotely deſcended from the royal family; but he enjoyed not that dignity without inquietude. Eoppa, nephew to king Ina by his brother Ingild, who died before that prince, had begot Eta, father to Alchmond; from whom ſprung Egbert,[d] a young man of the moſt promiſing hopes, who gave great jealouſy to Brithric, the reigning prince; both becauſe he ſeemed by his birth better entitled to the crown, and becauſe he had acquired, to an eminent degree, the affections of the people. Egbert, ſenſible of his danger from the ſuſpicions of Brithric, ſecretly withdrew into France,[e] where he was well received by Charlemagne. By living in the court, and ſerving in the armies, of that prince, the moſt able and moſt generous that had appeared in Europe during ſeveral ages, he acquired thoſe accompliſhments which afterwards enabled him to make ſuch a ſhining figure on the

throne. And, familiarizing himſelf to the manners of the French; who, as Malmeſbury obſerves,[f] were eminent both for valour and civility above all the weſtern nations; he learned to poliſh the rudeneſs and barbarity of the Saxon character. His early misfortunes thus proved of ſingular advantage to him.

It was not long ere Egbert had opportunities of diſplaying his natural and acquired talents. Brithric, king of Weſſex, had married Eadburga, natural daughter of Offa, king of Mercia, a profligate woman, equally infamous for cruelty and for incontinence. Having great influence over her huſband, ſhe often inſtigated him to deſtroy ſuch of the nobility as were obnoxious to her; and, where this expedient failed, ſhe ſcrupled not being herſelf active in traiterous attempts againſt them. She had mixed a cup of poiſon for a young nobleman, who had acquired her huſband's friendſhip, and had on that account become the object of her jealouſy: but, unfortunately, the king drank of the fatal cup along with his favourite, and ſoon after expired.[g] This tragical incident, joined to her other crimes, rendered Eadburga ſo odious that ſhe was obliged to fly into France; whence Egbert was at the ſame time recalled by the nobility, in order to aſcend the throne of his anceſtors.[h] He attained that dignity in the laſt year of the eighth century.

In the kingdoms of the Heptarchy an exact rule of ſucceſſion was either unknown or not ſtrictly obſerved: and thence the reigning prince was continually agitated with jealouſy againſt all the princes of the blood; whom he ſtill conſidered as rivals, and whoſe death alone could give him entire ſecurity in his poſſeſſion of the throne. From this fatal cauſe, together with the admiration of the monaſtic life, and the opinion of merit attending the preſervation of chaſtity even in a married ſtate, the royal families had been entirely extinguiſhed in all the kingdoms except that of Weſſex: and the emulations, ſuſpicions, and con-

ſpiracies, which had formerly been confined to the princes of the blood alone, were now diffuſed among all the nobility in the ſeveral Saxon ſtates. Egbert was the ſole deſcendant of thoſe firſt conquerors who ſubdued Britain, and who enhanced their authority by claiming a pedigree from Woden, the ſupreme divinity of their anceſtors. But that prince, though invited by this favourable circumſtance to make attempts on the neighbouring Saxons, gave them for ſome time no diſturbance, and rather choſe to turn his arms againſt the Britons in Cornwall, whom he defeated in ſeveral battles.[i] He was recalled from the conqueſt of that country by an invaſion made upon his dominions by Bernulf, king of Mercia.

The Mercians, before the acceſſion of Egbert, had very nearly attained the abſolute ſovereignty in the Heptarchy: they had reduced the Eaſt Angles under ſubjection, and eſtabliſhed tributary princes in the kingdoms of Kent and Eſſex. Northumberland was involved in anarchy: and no ſtate of any conſequence remained but that of Weſſex; which, much inferior in extent to Mercia, was ſupported ſolely by the great qualities of its ſovereign. Egbert led his army againſt the invaders; and, encountering them at Ellandum in Wiltſhire, obtained a complete victory; and, by the great ſlaughter which he made of them in their flight, gave a mortal blow to the power of the Mercians. Whilſt he himſelf, in proſecution of his victory, entered their country on the ſide of Oxfordſhire, and threatened the heart of their dominions, he ſent an army into Kent, commanded by Ethelwolph, his eldeſt ſon;[k] and, expelling Baldred, the tributary king, ſoon made himſelf maſter of that country. The kingdom of Eſſex was conquered with equal facility; and the Eaſt Angles, from their hatred to the Mercian government, which had been eſtabliſhed over them by treachery and violence, and probably exerciſed with tyranny, immediately roſe in arms, and craved the protection of

Egbert.[l] Bernulf, the Mercian king, who marched againſt them, was defeated and ſlain; and two years after Ludican, his ſucceſſor, met with the ſame fate. Theſe inſurrections and calamities facilitated the enterpriſes of Egbert; who advanced into the centre of the Mercian territories, and made eaſy conqueſts over a diſpirited and divided people. In order to engage them more eaſily to ſubmiſſion, he allowed Wiglef, their countryman, to retain the title of king, while he himſelf exerciſed the real powers of ſovereignty.[m] The anarchy which prevailed in Northumberland tempted him to carry ſtill farther his victorious arms: and the inhabitants, unable to reſiſt his power, and deſirous of poſſeſſing ſome eſtabliſhed form of government, were forward, on his firſt appearance, to ſend deputies; who ſubmitted to his authority, and ſwore allegiance to him as their ſovereign. Egbert, however, ſtill allowed to Northumberland, as he had done to Mercia and Eaſt Anglia, the power of electing a king, who paid him tribute, and was dependent on him.

Thus were united all the kingdoms of the Heptarchy in one great ſtate, near four hundred years after the firſt arrival of the Saxons in Britain; and the fortunate arms and prudent policy of Egbert at laſt effected what had been ſo often attempted in vain by ſo many princes.[n] Kent, Northumberland, and Mercia, which had ſucceſſively aſpired to general dominion, were now incorporated in his empire; and the other ſubordinate kingdoms ſeemed willingly to ſhare the ſame fate. His territories were nearly of the ſame extent with what is now properly called England; and a favourable proſpect was afforded to the Anglo Saxons of eſtabliſhing a civilized monarchy, poſſeſſed of tranquillity within itſelf, and ſecure againſt foreign invaſion. This great event happened in the year 827.[o]

The Saxons, though they had been ſo long ſettled in the iſland, ſeem not as yet to have been much improved beyond

their German anceſtors, either in arts, civility, knowledge, humanity, juſtice, or obedience to the laws. Even Chriſtianity, though it opened the way to connexions between them and the more poliſhed ſtates of Europe, had not hitherto been very effectual in baniſhing their ignorance, or ſoftening their barbarous manners. As they received that doctrine through the corrupted channels of Rome, it carried along with it a great mixture of credulity and ſuperſtition, equally deſtructive to the underſtanding and to morals. The reverence towards ſaints and reliques ſeems to have almoſt ſupplanted the adoration of the Supreme Being; monaſtic obſervances were eſteemed more meritorious than the active virtues; the knowledge of natural cauſes was neglected from the univerſal belief of miraculous interpoſitions and judgments; bounty to the church atoned for every violence againſt ſociety; and the remorſes for cruelty, murder, treachery, aſſaſſination, and the more robuſt vices, were appeaſed, not by amendment of life, but by penances, ſervility to the monks, and an abject and illiberal devotion.[p] The reverence for the clergy had been carried to ſuch a height that, wherever a perſon appeared in a ſacerdotal habit, though on the highway, the people flocked around him; and, ſhewing him all marks of profound reſpect, received every word he uttered as the moſt ſacred oracle.[q] Even the military virtues, ſo inherent in all the Saxon tribes, began to be neglected; and the nobility, preferring the ſecurity and ſloth of the cloiſter to the tumults and glory of war, valued themſelves chiefly on endowing monaſteries, of which they aſſumed the government.[r] The ſeveral kings, too, being extremely impoveriſhed by continual benefactions to the church, to which the ſtates of their kingdoms had weakly aſſented, could beſtow no rewards on valour or military ſervices, and retained not even ſufficient influence to ſupport their government.[s]

Another inconvenience, which attended this corrupt ſpecies of Chriſtianity, was the ſuperſtitious attachment to Rome, and the gradual ſubjection of the kingdom to a foreign juriſdiction. The Britons, having never acknowledged any ſubordination to the Roman pontiff, had conducted all eccleſiaſtical government by their domeſtic ſynods and councils:[t] but the Saxons, receiving their religion from Roman monks, were taught at the ſame time a profound reverence for that ſee, and were naturally led to regard it as the capital of their religion. Pilgrimages to Rome were repreſented as the moſt meritorious acts of devotion. Not only noblemen and ladies of rank undertook this tedious journey;[u] but kings themſelves, abdicating their crowns, fought for a ſecure paſſport to heaven at the feet of the Roman pontiff. New reliques, perpetually ſent from that endleſs mint of ſuperſtition, and magnified by lying miracles invented in convents, operated on the aſtoniſhed minds of the multitude. And every prince has attained the eulogies of the monks, the only hiſtorians of thoſe ages, not in proportion to his civil and military virtues, but to his devoted attachment towards their order, and his ſuperſtitious reverence for Rome.

The ſovereign pontiff, encouraged by this blindneſs and ſubmiſſive diſpoſition of the people, advanced every day in his encroachments on the independence of the Engliſh churches. Wilfrid, biſhop of Lindisferne, the ſole prelate of the Northumbrian kingdom, increaſed this ſubjection in the eighth century, by his making an appeal to Rome againſt the deciſions of an Engliſh ſynod, which had abridged his dioceſe by the erection of ſome new biſhoprics.[w] Agatho, the pope, readily embraced this precedent of an appeal to his court; and Wilfrid, though the haughtieſt and moſt luxurious prelate of his age,[x] having obtained with the people the character of ſanctity, was thus able to lay the foundation of this papal pretenſion.

The great topic, by which Wilfrid confounded the imaginations of men, was that St. Peter, to whoſe cuſtody the keys of heaven were intruſted, would certainly refuſe admittance to every one who ſhould be wanting in reſpect to his ſucceſſor. This conceit, well ſuited to vulgar conceptions, made great impreſſion on the people during ſeveral ages; and has not even at preſent loſt all influence in the catholic countries.

Had this abject ſuperſtition produced general peace and tranquillity, it had made ſome atonement for the ills attending it; but, beſides the uſual avidity of men for power and riches, frivolous controverſies in theology were engendered by it; which were ſo much the more fatal as they admitted not, like the others, of any final determination from eſtabliſhed poſſeſſion. The diſputes excited in Britain were of the moſt ridiculous kind, and entirely worthy of thoſe ignorant and barbarous ages. There were ſome intricacies, obſerved by all the Chriſtian churches, in adjuſting the day of keeping Eaſter; which depended on a complicated conſideration of the courſe of the ſun and moon: and it happened that the miſſionaries, who had converted the Scots and Britons, had followed a different calendar from that which was obſerved at Rome in the age when Auguſtine converted the Saxons. The prieſts alſo of all the Chriſtian churches were accuſtomed to ſhave part of their head; but the form given to this tonſure was different in the former from what was practiſed in the latter. The Scots and Britons pleaded the antiquity of their uſages; the Romans, and their diſciples the Saxons, inſiſted on the univerſality of theirs. That Eaſter muſt neceſſarily be kept by a rule, which comprehended both the day of the year and age of the moon, was agreed by all; that the tonſure of a prieſt could not be omitted without the utmoſt impiety was a point undiſputed: but the Romans and Saxons called their antagoniſts ſchiſmatics; becauſe they celebrated Eaſter on the very

day of the full moon in March, if that day fell on a Sunday, inſtead of waiting till the Sunday following; and becauſe they ſhaved the fore part of their head from ear to ear, inſtead of making that tonſure on the crown of the head, and in a circular form. In order to render their antagoniſts odious, they affirmed that once in ſeven years they concurred with the Jews in the time of celebrating that feſtival:[y] and, that they might recommend their own form of tonſure, they maintained that it imitated ſymbolically the crown of thorns worn by Chriſt in his paſſion; whereas the other form was invented by Simon Magus, without any regard to that repreſentation.[z] Theſe controverſies had, from the beginning, excited ſuch animoſity between the Britiſh and Romiſh prieſts, that, inſtead of concurring in their endeavours to convert the idolatrous Saxons, they refuſed all communion together, and each regarded his opponent as no better than a pagan.[a] The diſpute laſted more than a century; and was at laſt finiſhed, not by men's diſcovering the folly of it, which would have been too great an effort for human reaſon to accompliſh, but by the entire prevalence of the Romiſh ritual over the Scotch and Britiſh.[b] Wilfrid, biſhop of Landisferne, acquired great merit, both with the court of Rome and with all the ſouthern Saxons, by expelling the quarto-deciman ſchiſm, as it was called, from the Northumbrian kingdom, into which the neighbourhood of the Scots had formerly introduced it.[c]

Theodore, archbiſhop of Canterbury, called, in the year 680, a ſynod at Hatfield, conſiſting of all the biſhops in Britain;[d] where was accepted and ratified the decree of the Lateran council, ſummoned by Martin, againſt the hereſy of the Monothelites. The council and ſynod maintained, in oppoſition to theſe heretics, that, though the divine and human nature in Chriſt made but one perſon, yet had they different inclinations, wills, acts, and ſentiments; and that the unity of the perſon implied not

any unity in the conſcioufneſs.[e] This opinion it ſeems ſomewhat difficult to comprehend; and no one, unacquainted with the eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of thoſe ages, could imagine the height of zeal and violence with which it was then inculcated. The decree of the Lateran council calls the Monothelites impious, execrable, wicked, abominable, and even diabolical; and curſes and anathematizes them to all eternity.[f]

The Saxons, from the firſt introduction of Chriſtianity among them, had admitted the uſe of images; and perhaps that religion, without ſome of thoſe exterior ornaments, had not made ſo quick a progreſs with theſe idolaters: but they had not paid any ſpecies of worſhip or addreſs to images; and this abuſe never prevailed among Chriſtians till it received the ſanction of the ſecond council of Nice.

CHAPTER II.

827....979.

EGBERT....ETHELWOLF....ETHELBALD AND ETHELBERT....ETHERED ....ALFRED THE GREAT....EDWARD THE ELDER....ATHELSTAN.... EDMUND....EDRED....EDWY....EDGAR....EDWARD THE MARTYR.

EGBERT.

827....838.

THE kingdoms of the Heptarchy, though united by ſo recent a conqueſt, ſeemed to be firmly cemented into one ſtate under Egbert; and the inhabitants of the ſeveral provinces had loſt all deſire of revolting from that monarch, or of reſtoring their former independent governments. Their language was every where nearly the ſame, their cuſtoms, laws, inſtitutions civil and religious; and, as the race of the ancient kings was totally extinct in all the ſubjected ſtates, the people readily transferred their allegiance to a prince who ſeemed to merit it by the ſplendour of his victories, the vigour of his adminiſtration, and the ſuperior nobility of his birth. A union alſo in government opened to them the agreeable proſpect of future tranquillity; and it appeared more probable that they would henceforth become formidable to their neighbours than be expoſed to their

inroads and devaſtations. But theſe flattering views were ſoon overcaſt by the appearance of the Danes, who, during ſome centuries, kept the Anglo Saxons in perpetual inquietude, committed the moſt barbarous ravages upon them, and at laſt reduced them to grievous ſervitude.

The emperor Charlemagne, though naturally generous and humane, had been induced by bigotry to exerciſe great ſeverities upon the pagan Saxons in Germany, whom he ſubdued: and, beſides often ravaging their country with fire and ſword, he had in cool blood decimated all the inhabitants for their revolts; and had obliged them, by the moſt rigorous edicts, to make a ſeeming compliance with the Chriſtian doctrine. That religion, which had eaſily made its way among the Britiſh Saxons by inſinuation and addreſs, appeared ſhocking to their German brethren when impoſed on them by the violence of Charlemagne; and the more generous and warlike of theſe pagans had fled northward into Jutland, in order to eſcape the fury of his perſecutions. Meeting there with a people of ſimilar manners, they were readily received among them; and they ſoon ſtimulated the natives to concur in enterpriſes, which both promiſed revenge on the haughty conqueror, and afforded ſubſiſtence to thoſe numerous inhabitants with which the northern countries were now overburdened.[s] They invaded the provinces of France, which were expoſed by the degeneracy and diſſenſions of Charlemagne's poſterity; and, being there known under the general name of Normans, which they received from their northern ſituation, they became the terror of all the maritime and even of the inland countries. They were alſo tempted to viſit England in their frequent excurſions; and, being able, by ſudden inroads, to make great progreſs over a people who were not defended by any naval force, who had relaxed their military inſtitutions, and who were ſunk into a ſuperſtition which had

become odious to the Danes and ancient Saxons, they made no diſtinction in their hoſtilities between the French and Engliſh kingdoms. Their firſt appearance in this iſland was in the year 787,[h] when Brithric reigned in Weſſex. A ſmall body of them landed in that kingdom, with a view of learning the ſtate of the country; and, when the magiſtrate of the place queſtioned them concerning their enterpriſe, and ſummoned them to appear before the king and account for their intentions, they killed him, and, flying to their ſhips, eſcaped into their own country. The next alarm was given to Northumberland in the year 794,[i] when a body of theſe pirates pillaged a monaſtery; but, their ſhips being much damaged by a ſtorm, and their leader ſlain in a ſkirmiſh, they were at laſt defeated by the inhabitants, and the remainder of them put to the ſword. Five years after Egbert had eſtabliſhed his monarchy over England the Danes landed in the Iſle of Shepey; and, having pillaged it, eſcaped with impunity.[k] They were not ſo fortunate in their next year's enterpriſe, when they diſembarked from thirty-five ſhips, and were encountered by Egbert, at Charmouth in Dorſetſhire. The battle was bloody; but, though the Danes loſt great numbers, they maintained the poſt which they had taken, and thence made good their retreat to their ſhips.[l] Having learned by experience that they muſt expect a vigorous reſiſtance from this warlike prince, they entered into an alliance with the Britons of Cornwall; and, landing two years after in that country, made an inroad with their confederates into the county of Devon; but were met at Hengeſdown by Egbert, and totally defeated.[m] While England remained in this ſtate of anxiety, and defended itſelf more by temporary expedients than by any regular plan of adminiſtration, Egbert, who alone was able to provide effectually againſt this new evil, unfortunately died, and left the government to his ſon Ethelwolf.

ETHELWOLF.

838....857.

THIS prince had neither the abilities nor the vigour of his father; and was better qualified for governing a convent[n] than a kingdom. He began his reign with making a partition of his dominions, and delivering over to his eldeſt ſon Athelſtan the new conquered provinces of Eſſex, Kent, and Suſſex. But no inconveniencies ſeem to have ariſen from this partition, as the continual terror of the Daniſh invaſions prevented all domeſtic diſſenſion. A fleet of theſe ravagers, conſiſting of thirty-three ſail, appeared at Southampton; but were repulſed with loſs by Wolfhere, governor of the neighbouring country.[o] The ſame year Æthelhelm, governor of Dorſetſhire, routed another band which had diſembarked at Portſmouth; but he obtained the victory after a furious engagement, and he bought it with the loſs of his life.[p] Next year the Danes made ſeveral inroads into England; and fought battles, or rather ſkirmiſhes, in Eaſt Anglia and Lindeſey and Kent; where, though they were ſometimes repulſed and defeated, they always obtained their end, of committing ſpoil upon the country and carrying off their booty. They avoided coming to a general engagement, which was not ſuited to their plan of operations. Their veſſels were ſmall, and ran eaſily up the creeks and rivers, where they drew them aſhore; and, having formed an entrenchment round them, which they guarded with part of their number, the remainder ſcattered themſelves every where; and, carrying off the inhabitants and cattle and goods, they haſtened to their ſhips, and quickly diſappeared. If the military force of the county were aſſembled (for there was no time for troops to march from a diſtance), the Danes either were able to repulſe them, and to

continue their ravages with impunity, or they betook themſelves to their veſſels; and, ſetting ſail, ſuddenly invaded ſome diſtant quarter, which was not prepared for their reception. Every part of England was held in continual alarm; and the inhabitants of one county durſt not give aſſiſtance to thoſe of another, leſt their own families and property ſhould in the mean time be expoſed by their abſence to the fury of theſe barbarous ravagers.[q] All orders of men were involved in this calamity; and the prieſts and monks, who had been commonly ſpared in the domeſtic quarrels of the Heptarchy, were the chief objects on which the Daniſh idolaters exerciſed their rage and animoſity. Every ſeaſon of the year was dangerous; and the abſence of the enemy was no reaſon why any man could eſteem himſelf a moment in ſafety.

Theſe incurſions had now become almoſt annual; when the Danes, encouraged by their ſucceſſes againſt France as well as England (for both kingdoms were alike expoſed to this dreadful calamity), invaded the laſt in ſo numerous a body as ſeemed to threaten it with univerſal ſubjection. But the Engliſh, more military than the Britons, whom a few centuries before they had treated with like violence, rouſed themſelves with a vigour proportioned to the exigency. Ceorle, governor of Devonſhire, fought a battle with one body of the Danes at Wiganburgh,[r] and put them to rout with great ſlaughter. King Athelſtan attacked another at ſea near Sandwich, ſunk nine of their ſhips, and put the reſt to flight.[s] A body of them, however, ventured, for the firſt time, to take up winter quarters in England; and, receiving in the ſpring a ſtrong reinforcement of their countrymen in three hundred and fifty veſſels, they advanced from the Iſle of Thanet, where they had ſtationed themſelves; burned the cities of London and Canterbury; and, having put to flight Brichtric, who now governed Mercia under the title of King, they marched into the heart of Surrey, and laid every place waſte around them.

Ethelwolf, impelled by the urgency of the danger, marched againſt them at the head of the Weſt Saxons; and, carrying with him his ſecond ſon Ethelbald, gave them battle at Okely, and gained a bloody victory over them. This advantage procured but a ſhort reſpite to the Engliſh. The Danes ſtill maintained their ſettlement in the Iſle of Thanet; and, being attacked by Ealher and Huda, governors of Kent and Surrey, though defeated in the beginning of the action, they finally repulſed the aſſailants, and killed both the governors. They removed thence to the Iſle of Shepey; where they took up their winter quarters, that they might farther extend their devaſtation and ravages.

This unſettled ſtate of England hindered not Ethelwolf from making a pilgrimage to Rome; whither he carried his fourth and favourite ſon Alfred, then only ſix years of age.[v] He paſſed there a twelvemonth in exerciſes of devotion; and failed not in that moſt eſſential part of devotion, liberality to the church of Rome. Beſides giving preſents to the more diſtinguiſhed eccleſiaſtics, he made a perpetual grant of three hundred mancuſes[u] a year to that ſee; one third to ſupport the lamps of St. Peter's, another thoſe of St. Paul's, a third to the pope himſelf.[w] In his return home he married Judith, daughter of the emperor Charles the Bald; but on his landing in England he met with an oppoſition which he little looked for.

His eldeſt ſon Athelſtan being dead, Ethelbald, his ſecond, who had aſſumed the government, formed, in concert with many of the nobles, the project of excluding his father from a throne which his weakneſs and ſuperſtition ſeem to have rendered him ſo ill qualified to fill. The people were divided between the two princes; and a bloody civil war, joined to all the other calamities under which the Engliſh laboured, appeared inevitable; when Ethelwolf had the facility to yield to the greater part of his ſon's pretenſions. He made with him a partition of the king-

dom; and, taking to himſelf the eaſtern part, which was always at that time eſteemed the leaſt conſiderable, as well as the moſt expoſed,[x] he delivered over to Ethelbald the ſovereignty of the weſtern. Immediately after he ſummoned the ſtates of the whole kingdom, and with the ſame facility conferred a perpetual and important donation on the church.

The eccleſiaſtics, in thoſe days of ignorance, made rapid advances in the acquiſition of power and grandeur; and, inculcating the moſt abſurd and moſt intereſted doctrines, though they ſometimes met, from the contrary intereſts of the laity, with an oppoſition, which it required time and addreſs to overcome, they found no obſtacle in their reaſon or underſtanding. Not content with the donations of land made them by the Saxon princes and nobles, and with temporary oblations from the devotion of the people, they had caſt a wiſhful eye on a vaſt revenue, which they claimed, as belonging to them by a ſacred and indefeaſible title. However little verſed in the Scriptures, they had been able to diſcover that, under the Jewiſh law, a tenth of all the produce of land was conferred on the prieſthood; and, forgetting what they themſelves taught, that the moral part only of that law was obligatory on Chriſtians, they inſiſted that this donation conveyed a perpetual property, inherent by divine right in thoſe who officiated at the altar. During ſome centuries the whole ſcope of ſermons and homilies was directed to this purpoſe; and one would have imagined, from the general tenor of theſe diſcourſes, that all the practical parts of Chriſtianity were compriſed in the exact and faithful payment of tithes to the clergy.[y] Encouraged by their ſucceſs in inculcating theſe doctrines, they ventured farther than they were warranted even by the Levitical law; and pretended to draw the tenth of all induſtry, merchandiſe, wages of labourers, and pay of ſoldiers:[z] nay, ſome canoniſts went ſo far as to affirm that the clergy were entitled to the tithe of the profits made by

courtezans in the exercife of their profeffion.[a] Though parifhes had been inftituted in England by Honorius, archbifhop of Canterbury, near two centuries before,[b] the eccleſiaſtics had never yet been able to get poſſeſſion of the tithes: they therefore ſeized the preſent favourable opportunity of making that acquiſition; when a weak, ſuperſtitious, prince filled the throne, and when the people, diſcouraged by their loſſes from the Danes, and terrified with the fear of future invaſions, were ſuſceptible of any impreſſion which bore the appearance of religion.[c] So meritorious was this conceſſion deemed by the Engliſh, that, truſting entirely to ſupernatural aſſiſtance, they neglected the ordinary means of ſafety; and agreed, even in the preſent deſperate extremity, that the revenues of the church ſhould be exempted from all burdens, though impoſed for national defence and ſecurity.[d]

ETHELBALD AND ETHELBERT.

857....860....866.

Ethelwolf lived only two years after making this grant, and by his will he ſhared England between his two eldeſt ſons, Ethelbald and Ethelbert; the weſt being aſſigned to the former, the eaſt to the latter. Ethelbald was a profligate prince; and, marrying Judith his mother-in-law, gave great offence to the people; but, moved by the remonſtrances of Swithun, biſhop of Wincheſter, he was at laſt prevailed on to divorce her. His reign was ſhort; and Ethelbert his brother, ſucceeding to the government, behaved himſelf, during a reign of five years, in a manner more worthy of his birth and ſtation. The kingdom, however, was ſtill infeſted by the Danes, who made an inroad and ſacked Wincheſter; but were there defeated. A body alſo of theſe pirates,

who were quartered in the Iſle of Thanet, having deceived the Engliſh by a treaty, unexpectedly broke into Kent and committed great outrages.

ETHERED.

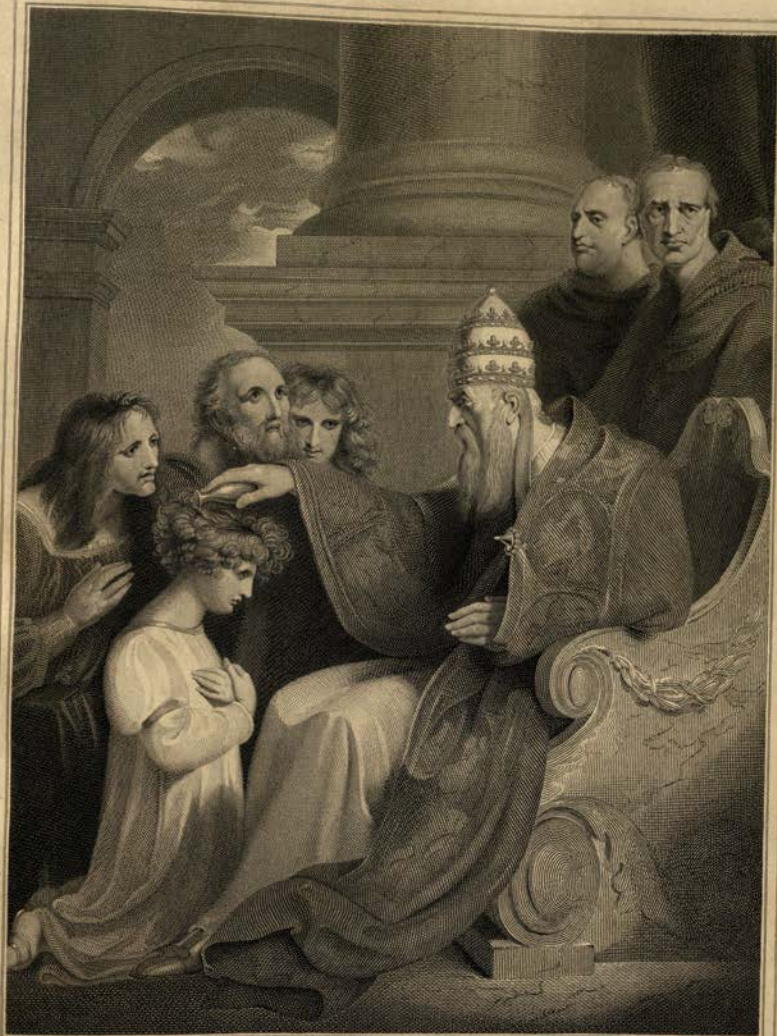
866....871.

ETHELBERT was ſucceeded by his brother Ethered; who, though he defended himſelf with bravery, enjoyed, during his whole reign, no tranquillity from thoſe Daniſh irruptions. His younger brother Alfred ſeconded him in all his enterpriſes, and generouſly ſacrificed to the public good all reſentment, which he might entertain on account of his being excluded by Ethered from a large patrimony which had been left him by his father.

The firſt landing of the Danes in the reign of Ethered was among the Eaſt Angles; who, more anxious for their preſent ſafety than for the common intereſt, entered into a ſeparate treaty with the enemy, and furniſhed them with horſes, which enabled them to make an irruption by land into the kingdom of Northumberland. They there ſeized the city of York; and defended it againſt Oſbricht and Ælla, two Northumbrian princes, who periſhed in the aſſault.[e] Encouraged by theſe ſucceſſes, and by the ſuperiority which they had acquired in arms, they now ventured, under the command of Hinguar and Hubba, to leave the ſea coaſt; and, penetrating into Mercia, they took up their winter quarters at Nottingham, where they threatened the kingdom with a final ſubjection. The Mercians, in this extremity, applied to Ethered for ſuccour; and that prince, with his brother Alfred, conducting a great army to Nottingham, obliged the enemy to diſlodge, and to retreat into Northumberland. Their reſtleſs diſpoſition, and their avidity for plunder, allowed them

not to remain long in thoſe quarters: they broke into Eaſt Anglia; defeated and took priſoner Edmund, the king of that country, whom they afterwards murdered in cool blood; and, committing the moſt barbarous ravages on the people, particularly on the monaſteries, they gave the Eaſt Angles cauſe to regret the temporary relief which they had obtained by aſſiſting the common enemy.

The next ſtation of the Danes was at Reading, whence they infeſted the neighbouring country by their incurſions. The Mercians, deſirous of ſhaking off their dependance on Ethered, refuſed to join him with their forces; and that prince, attended by Alfred, was obliged to march againſt the enemy with the Weſt Saxons alone, his hereditary ſubjects. The Danes, being defeated in an action, ſhut themſelves up in their garriſon; but, quickly making thence an irruption, they routed the Weſt Saxons, and obliged them to raiſe the ſiege. An action ſoon after enſued at Aſton in Berkſhire, where the Engliſh, in the beginning of the day, were in danger of a total defeat. Alfred, advancing with one diviſion of the army, was ſurrounded by the enemy in diſadvantageous ground; and Ethered, who was at that time hearing maſs, refuſed to march to his aſſiſtance till prayers ſhould be finiſhed.[f] But, as he afterwards obtained the victory, this ſucceſs, not the danger of Alfred, was aſcribed by the monks to the piety of that monarch. This battle of Aſton did not terminate the war: another battle was a little after fought at Baſing, where the Danes were more ſucceſsful; and, being reinforced by a new army from their own country, they became every day more terrible to the Engliſh. Amidſt theſe confuſions Ethered died of a wound which he had received in an action with the Danes; and left the inheritance of his cares and misfortunes, rather than of his grandeur, to his brother Alfred, who was now twenty-two years of age.



PRINCE ALFRED before POPE LEO the III

R. Westall A. pictr.

Published by R. Bowyer, Historic Gallery, Pall Mall, June 1. 1792.

J. Skirrow Sculp.

ALFRED

ALFRED.

871....901.

THIS prince gave very early marks of thoſe great virtues and ſhining talents by which, during the moſt difficult times, he ſaved his country from utter ruin and ſubverſion. Ethelwolf his father, the year after his return with Alfred from Rome, had again ſent the young prince thither with a numerous retinue; and, a report being ſpread of the king's death, the pope, Leo III, gave Alfred the royal unction;[g] whether prognoſticating his future greatneſs from the appearances of his pregnant genius, or willing to pretend, even in that age, to the right of conferring kingdoms. Alfred, on his return home, became every day more the object of his father's affections; but, being indulged in all youthful pleaſures, he was much neglected in his education: and he had already reached his twelfth year, when he was yet totally ignorant of the loweſt elements of literature. His genius was firſt rouſed by the recital of Saxon poems, in which the queen took delight; and this ſpecies of erudition, which is ſometimes able to make a conſiderable progreſs even among barbarians, expanded thoſe noble and elevated ſentiments which he had received from nature.[h] Encouraged by the queen, and ſtimulated by his own ardent inclination, he ſoon learned to read thoſe compoſitions; and proceeded thence to acquire the knowledge of the Latin tongue, in which he met with authors that better prompted his heroic ſpirit and directed his generous views. Abſorbed in theſe elegant purſuits, he regarded his acceſſion to royalty rather as an object of regret than of triumph;[i] but, being called to the throne in preference to his brother's children, as well by the will of his father (a circumſtance which had great

authority with the [k] Anglo Saxons) as by the vows of the whole nation and the urgency of public affairs, he ſhook off his literary indolence, and exerted himſelf in the defence of his people. He had ſcarcely buried his brother when he was obliged to take the field, in order to oppoſe the Danes, who had ſeized Wilton, and were exerciſing their uſual ravages on the countries around. He marched againſt them with the few troops which he could aſſemble on a ſudden, and, giving them battle, gained at firſt an advantage; but, by his purſuing the victory too far, the ſuperiority of the enemy's numbers prevailed, and recovered them the day. Their loſs, however, in the action was ſo conſiderable, that, fearing Alfred would receive daily reinforcement from his ſubjects, they were content to ſtipulate for a ſafe retreat, and promiſed to depart the kingdom. For that purpoſe they were conducted to London, and allowed to take up winter quarters there; but, careleſs of their engagements, they immediately ſet themſelves to the committing of ſpoil on the neighbouring country. Burrhed, king of Mercia, in whoſe territories London was ſituated, made a new ſtipulation with them, and engaged them, by preſents of money, to remove to Lindeſey in Lincolnſhire; a country which they had already reduced to ruin and deſolation. Finding therefore no object in that place, either for their rapine or violence, they ſuddenly turned back upon Mercia in a quarter where they expected to find it without defence; and, fixing their ſtation at Repton in Derbyſhire, they laid the whole country deſolate with fire and ſword. Burrhed, deſpairing of ſucceſs againſt an enemy whom no force could reſiſt, and no treaties bind, abandoned his kingdom, and, flying to Rome, took ſhelter in a cloiſter.[l] He was brother-in-law to Alfred, and the laſt who bore the title of King in Mercia.

The Weſt Saxons were now the only remaining power in England; and, though ſupported by the vigour and abilities of

Alfred, they were unable to ſuſtain the efforts of thoſe ravagers who from all quarters invaded them. A new ſwarm of Danes came over in the year 875, under three princes; Guthrum, Oſcital, and Amund; and, having firſt joined their countrymen at Repton, they ſoon found the neceſſity of ſeparating, in order to provide for their ſubſiſtence. Part of them, under the command of Haldene their chieftain,[m] marched into Northumberland, where they fixed their quarters; part of them took quarters at Cambridge, whence they diſlodged in the enſuing ſummer, and ſeized Wereham, in the county of Dorſet, the very centre of Alfred's dominions. That prince ſo ſtraightened them in theſe quarters that they were content to come to a treaty with him, and ſtipulated to depart his country. Alfred, well acquainted with their uſual perfidy, obliged them to ſwear upon the holy reliques to the obſervance of the treaty:[n] not that he expected they would pay any veneration to the reliques; but he hoped that, if they now violated this oath, their impiety would infallibly draw down upon them the vengeance of Heaven. But the Danes, little apprehenſive of the danger, ſuddenly, without ſeeking any pretence, fell upon Alfred's army, and, having put it to rout, marched weſtward, and took poſſeſſion of Exeter. The prince collected new forces, and exerted ſuch vigour, that he fought in one year eight battles with the enemy,[o] and reduced them to the utmoſt extremity. He hearkened, however, to new propoſals of peace; and was ſatisfied to ſtipulate with them that they would ſettle ſomewhere in England,[p] and would not permit the entrance of more ravagers into the kingdom. But, while he was expecting the execution of this treaty, which it ſeemed the intereſt of the Danes themſelves to fulfil, he heard that another body had landed, and, having collected all the ſcattered troops of their countrymen, had ſurpriſed Chippenham, then a conſiderable town, and were exerciſing their uſual ravages all around them.

This laſt incident quite broke the ſpirit of the Saxons, and reduced them to deſpair. Finding that, after all the miſerable havoc which they had undergone in their perſons and in their property; after all the vigorous actions which they had exerted in their own defence; a new band, equally greedy of ſpoil and ſlaughter, had diſembarked among them; they believed themſelves abandoned by Heaven to deſtruction, and delivered over to thoſe ſwarms of robbers which the fertile north thus inceſſantly poured forth againſt them. Some left their country, and retired into Wales, or fled beyond ſea; others ſubmitted to the conquerors, in hopes of appeaſing their fury by a ſervile obedience.[q] And, every man's attention being now engroſſed in concern for his own preſervation, no one would hearken to the exhortations of the king; who ſummoned them to make, under his conduct, one effort more in defence of their prince, their country, and their liberties. Alfred himſelf was obliged to relinquiſh the enſigns of his dignity; to diſmiſs his ſervants; and to ſeek ſhelter in the meaneſt diſguiſes from the purſuit and fury of his enemies. He concealed himſelf under a peaſant's habit, and lived ſome time in the houſe of a neatherd, who had been intruſted with the care of ſome of his cows.[r] There paſſed here an incident, which has been recorded by all the hiſtorians, and was long preſerved by popular tradition; though it contains nothing memorable in itſelf, except ſo far as every circumſtance is intereſting which attends ſo much virtue and dignity reduced to ſuch diſtreſs. The wife of the neatherd was ignorant of the condition of her royal gueſt; and, obſerving him one day buſy by the fireſide in trimming his bow and arrows, ſhe deſired him to take care of ſome cakes which were toaſting, while ſhe was employed elſewhere in other domeſtic affairs. But Alfred, whoſe thoughts were otherwiſe engaged, neglected this injunction; and the good woman, on her return, finding her cakes all burned,

ALFRED IN THE HOUSE OF THE NEATHERD

Painted by R.W.Buss, R.A.

Engraved by J. Rogers

rated the king very ſeverely, and upbraided him that he always ſeemed very well pleaſed to eat her warm cakes, though he was thus negligent in toaſting them.[s]

By degrees Alfred, as he found the ſearch of the enemy become more remiſs, collected ſome of his retainers, and retired into the centre of a bog, formed by the ſtagnating waters of the Thone and Parret, in Somerſetſhire. He here found two acres of firm ground; and, building a habitation on them, rendered himſelf ſecure by its fortifications, and ſtill more by the unknown and inacceſſible roads which led to it, and by the foreſts and moraſſes with which it was every way environed. This place he called Æthelingay, or the Iſle of Nobles;[t] and it now bears the name of Athelney. He thence made frequent and unexpected ſallies upon the Danes; who often felt the vigour of his arm, but knew not from what quarter the blow came. He ſubſiſted himſelf and his followers by the plunder which he acquired; he procured them conſolation by revenge; and, from ſmall ſucceſſes, he opened their minds to hope that, notwithſtanding his preſent low condition, more important victories might at length attend his valour.

Alfred lay here concealed, but not unactive, during a twelvemonth; when the news of a proſperous event reached his ears, and called him to the field. Hubba the Dane, having ſpread devaſtation, fire, and ſlaughter, over Wales, had landed in Devonſhire from twenty-three veſſels, and laid ſiege to the caſtle of Kinwith; a place ſituated near the mouth of the ſmall river Tau. Oddune, earl of Devonſhire, with his followers, had taken ſhelter there; and, being ill ſupplied with proviſions, and even with water, he determined, by ſome vigorous blow, to prevent the neceſſity of ſubmitting to the barbarous enemy. He made a ſudden ſally on the Danes before ſunriſing; and, taking them unprepared, he put them to rout, purſued them with great ſlaughter, killed Hubba himſelf, and got poſſeſſion of the famous Reaſen, or enchanted

ſtandard, in which the Danes put great confidence.[u] It contained the figure of a raven, which had been inwoven by the three ſiſters of Hinguar and Hubba with many magical incantations; and which, by its different movements, prognoſticated, as the Danes believed, the good or bad ſucceſs of any enterpriſe.[x]

When Alfred obſerved this ſymptom of ſucceſsful reſiſtance in his ſubjects he left his retreat; but, before he would aſſemble them in arms, or urge them to any attempt which, if unfortunate, might, in their preſent deſpondency, prove fatal, he reſolved to inſpect, himſelf, the ſituation of the enemy, and to judge of the probability of ſucceſs. For this purpoſe he entered their camp under the diſguiſe of a harper, and paſſed unſuſpected through every quarter. He ſo entertained them with his muſic and facetious humours that he met with a welcome reception; and was even introduced to the tent of Guthrum their prince, where he remained ſome days.[y] He remarked the ſupine ſecurity of the Danes, their contempt of the Engliſh, their negligence in foraging and plundering, and their diſſolute waſting of what they gained by rapine and violence. Encouraged by theſe favourable appearances, he ſecretly ſent emiſſaries to the moſt conſiderable of his ſubjects, and ſummoned them to a rendezvous, attended by their warlike followers, at Brixton, on the borders of Selwood foreſt.[z] The Engliſh, who had hoped to put an end to their calamities by ſervile ſubmiſſion, now found the inſolence and rapine of the conqueror more intolerable than all paſt fatigues and dangers; and at the appointed day they joyfully reſorted to their prince. On his appearance they received him with ſhouts of applauſe;[a] and could not ſatiate their eyes with the ſight of this beloved monarch, whom they had long regarded as dead, and who now, with voice and looks expreſſing his confidence of ſucceſs, called them to liberty and to vengeance. He inſtantly conducted them to Eddington, where the Danes were

encamped; and, taking advantage of his previous knowledge of the place, he directed his attack againſt the moſt unguarded quarter of the enemy. The Danes, ſurpriſed to ſee an army of Engliſh, whom they conſidered as totally ſubdued, and ſtill more aſtoniſhed to hear that Alfred was at their head, made but a faint reſiſtance, notwithſtanding their ſuperiority of number, and were ſoon put to flight with great ſlaughter. The remainder of the routed army, with their prince, was beſieged by Alfred in a fortified camp, to which they fled; but, being reduced to extremity by want and hunger, they had recourſe to the clemency of the victor, and offered to ſubmit on any conditions. The king, no leſs generous than brave, gave them their lives; and even formed a ſcheme for converting them from mortal enemies into faithful ſubjects and confederates. He knew that the kingdoms of Eaſt Anglia and Northumberland were totally deſolated by the frequent inroads of the Danes; and he now propoſed to repeople them, by ſettling there Guthrum and his followers. He hoped that the new planters would at laſt betake themſelves to induſtry, when, by reaſon of his reſiſtance, and the exhauſted condition of the country, they could no longer ſubſiſt by plunder; and that they might ſerve him as a rampart againſt any future incurſions of their countrymen. But, before he ratified theſe mild conditions with the Danes, he required that they ſhould give him one pledge of their ſubmiſſion, and of their inclination to incorporate with the Engliſh, by declaring their converſion to Chriſtianity.[b] Guthrum and his army had no averſion to the propoſal; and, without much inſtruction, or argument, or conference, they were all admitted to baptiſm. The king anſwered for Guthrum at the font, gave him the name of Athelſtan, and received him as his adopted ſon.[c]

The ſucceſs of this expedient ſeemed to correſpond to Alfred's hopes. The greater part of the Danes ſettled peaceably

in their new quarters; ſome ſmaller bodies of the ſame nation, which were diſperſed in Mercia, were diſtributed into the five cities of Derby, Leiceſter, Stamford, Lincoln, and Nottingham, and were thence called the Fif or Five-burghers. The more turbulent and unquiet made an expedition into France under the command of Haſtings;[d] and, except by a ſhort incurſion of Danes, who ſailed up the Thames and landed at Fulham, but ſuddenly retreated to their ſhips on finding the country in a poſture of defence, Alfred was not for ſome years infeſted by the inroads of thoſe barbarians.[e]

The king employed this interval of tranquillity in reſtoring order to the ſtate, which had been ſhaken by ſo many violent convulſions; in eſtabliſhing civil and military inſtitutions; in compoſing the minds of men to induſtry and juſtice; and in providing againſt the return of like calamities. He was, more properly than his grandfather Egbert, the ſole monarch of the Engliſh (for ſo the Saxons were now univerſally called), becauſe the kingdom of Mercia was at laſt incorporated in his ſtate, and was governed by Ethelbert his brother-in-law, who bore the title of Earl. And, though the Danes, who peopled Eaſt Anglia and Northumberland, were for ſome time ruled immediately by their own princes, they all acknowledged a ſubordination to Alfred, and ſubmitted to his ſuperior authority. As equality among ſubjects is the great ſource of concord, Alfred gave the ſame laws to the Danes and Engliſh, and put them entirely on a like footing in the adminiſtration both of civil and criminal juſtice. The fine for the murder of a Dane was the ſame with that for the murder of an Engliſhman; the great ſymbol of equality in thoſe ages.

The king, after rebuilding the ruined cities, particularly London,[f] which had been deſtroyed by the Danes in the reign of Ethelwolf, eſtabliſhed a regular militia for the defence of the kingdom. He ordained that all his people ſhould be armed and

regiſtered; he aſſigned them a regular rotation of duty; he diſtributed part into the caſtles and fortreſſes, which he built at proper places;[g] he required another part to take the field on any alarm, and to aſſemble at ſtated places of rendezvous; and he left a ſufficient number at home, who were employed in the cultivation of the land, and who afterwards took their turn in military ſervice.[h] The whole kingdom was like one great garriſon; and the Danes could no ſooner appear in one place than a ſufficient number was aſſembled to oppoſe them, without leaving the other quarters defenceleſs or diſarmed.[i]

But Alfred, ſenſible that the proper method of oppoſing an enemy, who made incurſions by ſea, was to meet them on their own element, took care to provide himſelf with a naval [k] force; which, though the moſt natural defence of an iſland, had hitherto been totally neglected by the Engliſh. He increaſed the ſhipping of his kingdom both in number and ſtrength; and trained his ſubjects in the practice, as well of ſailing, as of naval action. He diſtributed his armed veſſels in proper ſtations round the iſland; and was ſure to meet the Daniſh ſhips either before or after they had landed their troops, and to purſue them in all their incurſions. Though the Danes might ſuddenly, by ſurpriſe, diſembark on the coaſt, which was generally become deſolate by their frequent ravages, they were encountered by the Engliſh fleet in their retreat; and eſcaped not, as formerly, by abandoning their booty; but paid, by their total deſtruction, the penalty of the diſorders which they had committed.

In this manner Alfred repelled ſeveral inroads of theſe piratical Danes; and maintained his kingdom, during ſome years, in ſafety and tranquillity. A fleet of a hundred and twenty ſhips of war was ſtationed upon the coaſt; and, being provided with warlike engines, as well as with expert ſeamen, both Friſians and Engliſh (for Alfred ſupplied the defects of his own ſubjects

by engaging able foreigners in his ſervice), maintained a ſuperiority over thoſe ſmaller bands with which England had ſo often been infeſted.[l] But at laſt Haſtings, the famous Daniſh chief, having ravaged all the provinces of France, both along the ſea coaſt and the Loire and Seine, and being obliged to quit that country, more by the deſolation which he himſelf had occaſioned than by the reſiſtance of the inhabitants, appeared off the coaſt of Kent with a fleet of three hundred and thirty ſail. The greater part of the enemy diſembarked in the Rother, and ſeized the fort of Apuldore. Haſtings himſelf, commanding a fleet of eighty ſail, entered the Thames; and, fortifying Milton in Kent, began to ſpread his forces over the country, and to commit the moſt deſtructive ravages. But Alfred, on the firſt alarm of this deſcent, flew to the defence of his people at the head of a ſelect band of ſoldiers, whom he always kept about his perſon;[m] and, gathering to him the armed militia from all quarters, appeared in the field with a force ſuperior to the enemy. All ſtraggling parties, whom neceſſity or love of plunder had drawn to a diſtance from their chief encampment, were cut off by the Engliſh;[n] and theſe pirates, inſtead of increaſing their ſpoil, found themſelves cooped up in their fortifications, and obliged to ſubſiſt by the plunder which they had brought from France. Tired of this ſituation, which muſt in the end prove ruinous to them, the Danes at Apuldore roſe ſuddenly from their encampment, with an intention of marching towards the Thames, and paſſing over into Eſſex: but they eſcaped not the vigilance of Alfred, who encountered them at Farnham; put them to rout;[o] ſeized all their horſes and baggage; and chaſed the runaways on board their ſhips, which carried them up the Colne to Merſey in Eſſex, where they entrenched themſelves. Haſtings, at the ſame time, and probably by concert, made a like movement; and, deſerting Milton, took poſſeſſion of Bamflete, near the Iſle of Canvey in

ALFRED LIBERATING THE FAMILY OF HASTINGS

the ſame county;[p] where he haſtily threw up fortifications for his defence againſt the power of Alfred.

Unfortunately for the Engliſh, Guthrum, prince of the Eaſt Anglian Danes, was now dead; as was alſo Guthred, whom the king had appointed governor of the Northumbrians; and thoſe reſtleſs tribes, being no longer reſtrained by the authority of their princes, and being encouraged by the appearance of ſo great a body of their countrymen, broke into rebellion; ſhook off the authority of Alfred; and, yielding to their inveterate habits of war and depredation,[q] embarked on board two hundred and forty veſſels, and appeared before Exeter in the weſt of England. Alfred loſt not a moment in oppoſing this new enemy. Having left ſome forces at London to make head againſt Haſtings and the other Danes, he marched ſuddenly to the [r] weſt; and, falling on the rebels before they were aware, purſued them to their ſhips with great ſlaughter. Theſe ravagers, ſailing next to Suſſex, began to plunder the country near Chicheſter: but the order which Alfred had every where eſtabliſhed ſufficed here, without his preſence, for the defence of the place; and the rebels, meeting with a new repulſe, in which many of them were killed and ſome of their ſhips taken,[s] were obliged to put again to ſea, and were diſcouraged from attempting any other enterpriſe.

Meanwhile the Daniſh invaders in Eſſex, having united their force under the command of Haſtings, advanced into the inland country, and made ſpoil of all around them; but ſoon had reaſon to repent of their temerity. The Engliſh army left in London, aſſiſted by a body of the citizens, attacked the enemy's entrenchments at Bamflete; overpowered the garriſon; and, having done great execution upon them, carried off the wife and two ſons of Haſtings.[t] Alfred generouſly ſpared theſe captives; and even reſtored them to Haſtings,[u] on condition that he ſhould depart the kingdom.

But, though the king had thus honourably rid himſelf of this dangerous enemy, he had not entirely ſubdued or expelled the invaders. The piratical Danes willingly followed in an excurſion any proſperous leader who gave them hopes of booty; but were not ſo eaſily induced to relinquiſh their enterpriſe, or ſubmit to return, baffled and without plunder, into their native country. Great numbers of them, after the departure of Haſtings, ſeized and fortified Shobury at the mouth of the Thames; and, having left a garriſon there, they marched along the river till they came to Boddington in the county of Gloceſter; where, being reinforced by ſome Welſh, they threw up entrenchments, and prepared for their defence. The king here ſurrounded them with the whole force of his dominions;[x] and, as he had now a certain proſpect of victory, he reſolved to truſt nothing to chance, but rather to maſter his enemies by famine than aſſault. They were reduced to ſuch extremities, that, having eaten their own horſes, and having many of them periſhed with hunger,[y] they made a deſperate ſally upon the Engliſh; and, though the greater number fell in the action, a conſiderable body made their [z]eſcape. Theſe roved about for ſome time in England, ſtill purſued by the vigilance of Alfred: they attacked Leiceſter with ſucceſs; defended themſelves in Hartford; and then fled to Quatford, where they were finally broken and ſubdued. The ſmall remains of them either diſperſed themſelves among their countrymen in Northumberland and Eaſt Anglia,[a] or had recourſe again to the ſea, where they exerciſed piracy, under the command of Sigefert, a Northumbrian. This freebooter, well acquainted with Alfred's naval preparations, had framed veſſels of a new conſtruction, higher, and longer, and ſwifter, than thoſe of the Engliſh: but the king ſoon diſcovered his ſuperior ſkill, by building veſſels ſtill higher, and longer, and ſwifter, than thoſe of the Northumbrians; and, falling upon them while they were exerciſing their ravages

in the weſt, he took twenty of their ſhips; and, having tried all the priſoners at Winchester, he hanged them as pirates, the common enemies of mankind.

The well timed ſeverity of this execution, together with the excellent poſture of defence eſtabliſhed every where, reſtored full tranquillity in England, and provided for the future ſecurity of the government. The Eaſt Anglian and Northumbrian Danes, on the firſt appearance of Alfred upon their frontiers, made anew the moſt humble ſubmiſſions to him; and he thought it prudent to take them under his immediate government, without eſtabliſhing over them a viceroy of their own nation.[b] The Welſh alſo acknowledged his authority. And this great prince had now, by prudence, and juſtice, and valour, eſtabliſhed his ſovereignty over all the ſouthern parts of the iſland, from the Engliſh channel to the frontiers of Scotland; when he died, in the vigour of his age and the full ſtrength of his faculties, after a glorious reign of twenty-nine years and a half:[c] in which he deſervedly attained the appellation of Alfred the Great, and the title of Founder of the Engliſh monarchy.

The merit of this prince, both in private and public life, may with advantage be ſet in oppoſition to that of any monarch or citizen which the annals of any age or any nation can preſent to us. He ſeems indeed to be the model of that perfect character, which, under the denomination of a ſage or wiſe man, philoſophers have been fond of delineating, rather as a fiction of their imagination than in hopes of ever ſeeing it really exiſting: ſo happily were all his virtues tempered together; ſo juſtly were they blended; and ſo powerfully did each prevent the other from exceeding its proper boundaries! He knew how to reconcile the moſt enterpriſing ſpirit with the cooleſt moderation; the moſt obſtinate perſeverance with the eaſieſt flexibility; the moſt ſevere juſtice with the gentleſt lenity; the greateſt vigour in command-

ing with the moſt perfect affability of deportment;[d] the higheſt capacity and inclination for ſcience with the moſt ſhining talents for action. His civil and military virtues are almoſt equally the objects of our admiration; excepting only that the former, being more rare among princes as well as more uſeful, ſeem chiefly to challenge our applauſe. Nature alſo, as if deſirous that ſo bright a production of her ſkill ſhould be ſet in the faireſt light, had beſtowed on him every bodily accompliſhment; vigour of limbs, dignity of ſhape and air, with a pleaſing, engaging, and open countenance.[e] Fortune alone, by throwing him into that barbarous age, deprived him of hiſtorians worthy to tranſmit his fame to poſterity; and we wiſh to ſee him delineated in more lively colours, and with more particular ſtrokes, that we may at leaſt perceive ſome of thoſe ſmall ſpecks and blemiſhes, from which, as a man, it is impoſſible he could be entirely exempted.

But we ſhould give but an imperfect idea of Alfred's merit, were we to confine our narration to his military exploits, and were not more particular in our account of his inſtitutions for the execution of juſtice, and of his zeal for the encouragement of arts and ſciences.

After Alfred had ſubdued, and had ſettled or expelled, the Danes, he found the kingdom in the moſt wretched condition; deſolated by the ravages of thoſe barbarians, and thrown into diſorders which were calculated to perpetuate its miſery. Though the great armies of the Danes were broken, the country was full of ſtraggling troops of that nation; who, being accuſtomed to live by plunder, were become incapable of induſtry; and who, from the natural ferocity of their manners, indulged themſelves in committing violence, even beyond what was requiſite to ſupply their neceſſities. The Engliſh themſelves, reduced to the moſt extreme indigence by theſe continued depredations, had ſhaken off all bands of government; and thoſe who had been

plundered to-day betook themſelves next day to the like diſorderly life, and, from deſpair, joined the robbers in pillaging and ruining their fellow citizens. Theſe were the evils for which it was neceſſary that the vigilance and activity of Alfred ſhould provide a remedy.

That he might render the execution of juſtice ſtrict and regular, he divided all England into counties; theſe counties he ſubdivided into hundreds; and the hundreds into tithings. Every houſeholder was anſwerable for the behaviour of his family and ſlaves, and even of his gueſts, if they lived above three days in his houſe. Ten neighbouring houſeholders were formed into one corporation; who, under the name of a tithing, decennary, or fribourg, were anſwerable for each other's conduct; and over whom one perſon, called a tithingman, headbourg, or borſholder, was appointed to preſide. Every man was puniſhed as an outlaw who did not regiſter himſelf in ſome tithing: and no man could change his habitation without a warrant or certificate from the borſholder of the tithing to which he formerly belonged.

When any perſon in any tithing or decennary was guilty of a crime, the borſholder was ſummoned to anſwer for him; and, if he were not willing to be ſurety for his appearance and his clearing himſelf, the criminal was committed to priſon, and there detained till his trial. If he fled, either before or after finding ſureties, the borſholder and decennary became liable to inquiry, and were expoſed to the penalties of law. Thirty-one days were allowed them for producing the criminal; and, if the time elapſed without their being able to find him, the borſholder, with two other members of the decennary, was obliged to appear, and, together with three chief members of the three neighbouring decennaries (making twelve in all), to ſwear that his decennary was free from all privity both of the crime committed and of the eſcape of the criminal. If the borſholder could not find ſuch

a number to anſwer for their innocence, the decennary was compelled by fine to make ſatisfaction to the king, according to the degree of the offence.[f] By this inſtitution every man was obliged, from his own intereſt, to keep a watchful eye over the conduct of his neighbours; and was in a manner ſurety for the behaviour of thoſe who were placed under the diviſion to which he belonged: whence theſe decennaries received the name of frank-pledges.

Such a regular diſtribution of the people, with ſuch a ſtrict confinement in their habitation, may not be neceſſary in times when men are more inured to obedience and juſtice; and it might perhaps be regarded as deſtructive of liberty and commerce in a poliſhed ſtate: but it was well calculated to reduce that fierce and licentious people under the ſalutary reſtraint of law and government. But Alfred took care to temper theſe rigours by other inſtitutions favourable to the freedom of the citizens; and nothing could be more popular and liberal than his plan for the adminiſtration of juſtice. The borſholder ſummoned together his whole decennary to aſſiſt him in deciding any leſſer difference, which occurred among the members of this ſmall community. In affairs of greater moment, in appeals from the decennary, or in controverſies ariſing between members of different decennaries, the cauſe was brought before the hundred; which conſiſted of ten decennaries, or a hundred families of freemen, and which was regularly aſſembled once in four weeks for the deciding of cauſes.[g] Their method of deciſion deſerves to be noted, as being the origin of juries; an inſtitution admirable in itſelf, and the beſt calculated for the preſervation of liberty and the adminiſtration of juſtice that ever was deviſed by the wit of man. Twelve freeholders were choſen; who, having ſworn, together with the hundreder, or preſiding magiſtrate of that diviſion, to adminiſter impartial juſtice,[h] proceeded to the exami-

nation of that cauſe which was ſubmitted to their juriſdiction. And, beſide theſe monthly meetings of the hundred, there was an annual meeting, appointed for a more general inſpection of the police of the diſtrict; for the inquiry into crimes; the correction of abuſes in magiſtrates; and the obliging of every perſon to ſhew the decennary in which he was regiſtered. The people, in imitation of their anceſtors the ancient Germans, aſſembled there in arms; whence a hundred was ſometimes called a wapentake; and its court ſerved both for the ſupport of military diſcipline and for the adminiſtration of civil juſtice.[i]

The next ſuperior court to that of the hundred was the county court; which met twice a year, after Michaelmas and Eaſter, and conſiſted of the freeholders of the county, who poſſeſſed an equal vote in the deciſion of cauſes. The biſhop preſided in this court, together with the alderman; and the proper object of the court was the receiving of appeals from the hundreds and decennaries, and the deciding of ſuch controverſies as aroſe between men of different hundreds. Formerly the alderman poſſeſſed both the civil and military authority: but Alfred, ſenſible that this conjunction of powers rendered the nobility dangerous and independent, appointed alſo a ſheriff in each county, who enjoyed a co-ordinate authority with the former in the judicial [k] function. His office alſo empowered him to guard the rights of the crown in the county, and to levy the fines impoſed; which in that age formed no contemptible part of the public revenue.

There lay an appeal, in default of juſtice, from all theſe courts to the king himſelf in council; and, as the people, ſenſible of the equity and great talents of Alfred, placed their chief confidence in him, he was ſoon overwhelmed with appeals from all parts of England. He was indefatigable in the diſpatch of theſe cauſes:[l] but, finding that his time muſt be entirely engroſſed by this branch of duty, he reſolved to obviate the inconvenience

by correcting the ignorance or corruption of the inferior magiſtrates, from which it aroſe.[m] He took care to have his nobility inſtructed in letters and the law;[n] he choſe the earls and ſheriffs from among the men moſt celebrated for probity and knowledge; he puniſhed ſeverely all malverſation in office;[o] and he removed all the earls whom he found unequal to the truſt;[p] allowing only ſome of the more elderly to ſerve by a deputy, till their death ſhould make room for more worthy ſucceſſors.

The better to guide the magiſtrates in the adminiſtration of juſtice, Alfred framed a body of laws; which, though now loſt, ſerved long as the baſis of Engliſh juriſprudence, and is generally deemed the origin of what is denominated the Common Law. He appointed regular meetings of the ſtates of England twice a year in London;[q] a city which he himſelf had repaired and beautified, and which he thus rendered the capital of the kingdom. The ſimilarity of theſe inſtitutions to the cuſtoms of the ancient Germans, to the practice of the other northern conquerors, and to the Saxon laws during the Heptarchy, prevents us from regarding Alfred as the ſole author of this plan of government; and leads us rather to think that, like a wiſe man, he contented himſelf with reforming, extending, and executing, the inſtitutions which he found previouſly eſtabliſhed. But, on the whole, ſuch ſucceſs attended his legiſlation, that every thing bore ſuddenly a new face in England. Robberies and iniquities of all kinds were repreſſed by the puniſhment or reformation of the criminals;[r] and ſo exact was the general police, that Alfred, it is ſaid, hung up, by way of bravado, golden bracelets near the highways; and no man dared to touch them.[s] Yet, amidſt theſe rigours of juſtice, this great prince preſerved the moſt ſacred regard to the liberty of his people; and it is a memorable ſentiment, preſerved in his will, that it was juſt the Engliſh ſhould for ever remain as free as their own thoughts.[t]

As good morals and knowledge are almoſt inſeparable in every age, though not in every individual, the care of Alfred for the encouragement of learning among his ſubjects was another uſeful branch of his legiſlation, and tended to reclaim the Engliſh from their former diſſolute and ferocious manners. But the king was guided in this purſuit leſs by political views than by his natural bent and propenſity towards letters. When he came to the throne he found the nation ſunk into the groſſeſt ignorance and barbariſm; proceeding from the continued diſorders in the government, and from the ravages of the Danes. The monaſteries were deſtroyed; the monks butchered or diſperſed; their libraries burned; and thus the only ſeats of erudition in thoſe ages were totally ſubverted. Alfred himſelf complains that on his acceſſion he knew not one perſon, ſouth of the Thames, who could ſo much as interpret the Latin ſervice; and very few in the northern parts who had even reached that pitch of erudition. But this prince invited over the moſt celebrated ſcholars from all parts of Europe; he eſtabliſhed ſchools every where for the inſtruction of his people; he founded, at leaſt repaired, the univerſity of Oxford, and endowed it with many privileges, revenues, and immunities; he enjoined by law all freeholders, poſſeſſed of two hides[n] of land or more, to ſend their children to ſchool for their inſtruction; he gave preferment both in church and ſtate to ſuch only as had made ſome proficiency in knowledge: and by all theſe expedients he had the ſatisfaction, before his death, to ſee a great change in the face of affairs; and in a work of his, which is ſtill extant, he congratulates himſelf on the progreſs which learning, under his patronage, had already made in England.

But the moſt effectual expedient, employed by Alfred for the encouragement of learning, was his own example, and the conſtant aſſiduity with which, notwithſtanding the multiplicity and urgency of his affairs, he employed himſelf in the purſuits of

knowledge. He uſually divided his time into three equal portions: one was employed in ſleep, and the refection of his body by diet and exerciſe; another in the diſpatch of buſineſs; a third in ſtudy and devotion; and, that he might more exactly meaſure the hours, he made uſe of burning tapers of equal length, which he fixed in lanterns;[w] an expedient ſuited to that rude age, when the geometry of dialling, and the mechaniſm of clocks and watches, were totally unknown. And, by ſuch a regular diſtribution of his time, though he often laboured under great bodily infirmities,[x] this martial hero, who fought in perſon fifty-ſix battles by ſea and land,[y] was able, during a life of no extraordinary length, to acquire more knowledge, and even to compoſe more books, than moſt ſtudious men, though bleſſed with the greateſt leiſure and application, have, in more fortunate ages, made the object of their uninterrupted induſtry.

Senſible that the people, at all times, eſpecially when their underſtandings are obſtructed by ignorance and bad education, are not much ſuſceptible of ſpeculative inſtruction, Alfred endeavoured to convey his morality by apologues, parables, ſtories, apophthegms, couched in poetry: and, beſides propagating among his ſubjects former compoſitions of that kind, which he found in the Saxon tongue,[z] he exerciſed his genius in inventing works of a like nature,[a] as well as in tranſlating from the Greek the elegant fables of Æſop. He alſo gave Saxon tranſlations of Oroſius's and Bede's hiſtories, and of Boethius concerning the conſolation of philoſophy.[b] And he deemed it nowiſe derogatory from his other great characters of ſovereign, legiſlator, warrior, and politician, thus to lead the way to his people in the purſuits of literature.

Meanwhile this prince was not negligent in encouraging the vulgar and mechanical arts; which have a more ſenſible, though not a cloſer, connexion with the intereſts of ſociety. He invited, from all quarters, induſtrious foreigners to repeople his country,

which had been deſolated by the ravages of the Danes.[c] He introduced and encouraged manufactures of all kinds; and no inventor or improver of any ingenious art did he ſuffer to go unrewarded.[d] He prompted men of activity to betake themſelves to navigation, to puſh commerce into the moſt remote countries, and to acquire riches by propagating induſtry among their fellow citizens. He ſet apart a ſeventh portion of his own revenue for maintaining a number of workmen, whom he conſtantly employed in rebuilding the ruined cities, caſtles, palaces, and[e] monaſteries. Even the elegancies of life were brought to him from the Mediterranean and the Indies;[f] and his ſubjects, by ſeeing thoſe productions of the peaceful arts, were taught to reſpect the virtues of juſtice and induſtry, from which alone they could ariſe. Both living and dead, Alfred was regarded by foreigners, no leſs than by his own ſubjects, as the greateſt prince, after Charlemagne, that had appeared in Europe during ſeveral ages, and as one of the wiſeſt and beſt that ever adorned the annals of any nation.

Alfred had, by his wife Ethelſwitha, daughter of a Mercian earl, three ſons and three daughters. The eldeſt ſon, Edmund, died, without iſſue, in his father's lifetime. The third, Ethelward, inherited his father's paſſion for letters, and lived a private life. The ſecond, Edward, ſucceeded to his power; and paſſes by the appellation of Edward the Elder, being the firſt of that name who ſat on the Engliſh throne.

EDWARD THE ELDER.

901....925.

THIS prince, who equalled his father in military talents, though inferior to him in knowledge and erudition,[g] found, immediately

on his acceſſion, a ſpecimen of that turbulent life to which all princes, and even all individuals, were expoſed, in an age when men, leſs reſtrained by law or juſtice, and leſs occupied by induſtry, had no aliment for their inquietude but wars, inſurrections, convulſions, rapine, and depredation. Ethelwald, his couſin-german, ſon of king Ethelbert, the elder brother of Alfred, inſiſted on a preferable title;[h] and, arming his partiſans, took poſſeſſion of Winbourne, where he ſeemed determined to defend himſelf to the laſt extremity, and to wait the iſſue of his [i] pretenſions. But, when the king approached the town with a great army, Ethelwald, having the proſpect of certain deſtruction, made his eſcape, and fled firſt into Normandy, then into Northumberland; where he hoped that the people, who had been recently ſubdued by Alfred, and who were impatient of peace, would, on the intelligence of that great prince's death, ſeize the firſt pretence or opportunity of rebellion. The event did not diſappoint his expectations; the Northumbrians declared for him;[k] and Ethelwald, having thus connected his intereſts with the Daniſh tribes, went beyond ſea, and, collecting a body of theſe free-booters, he excited the hopes of all thoſe who had been accuſtomed to ſubſiſt by rapine and violence.[l] The Eaſt Anglian Danes joined his party; the Five-burghers, who were ſeated in the heart of Mercia, began to put themſelves in motion; and the Engliſh found that they were again menaced with thoſe convulſions, from which the valour and policy of Alfred had ſo lately reſcued them. The rebels, headed by Ethelwald, made an incurſion into the counties of Gloceſter, Oxford, and Wilts; and, having exerciſed their ravages in theſe places, they retired with their booty before the king, who had aſſembled an army, was able to approach them. Edward, however, who was determined that his preparations ſhould not be fruitleſs, conducted his forces into Eaſt Anglia; and retaliated the injuries which the inhabitants

had committed, by ſpreading the like devaſtation among them. Satiated with revenge, and loaded with booty, he gave orders to retire. But the authority of thoſe ancient kings, which was feeble in peace, was not much better eſtabliſhed in the field; and the Kentiſh men, greedy of more ſpoil, ventured, contrary to repeated orders, to ſtay behind him, and to take up their quarters in Bury. This diſobedience proved in the iſſue fortunate to Edward. The Danes aſſaulted the Kentiſh men; but met with ſo vigorous a reſiſtance that, though they gained the field of battle, they bought that advantage by the loſs of their braveſt leaders; and, among the reſt, by that of Ethelwald, who periſhed in the action.[m] The king, freed from the fear of ſo dangerous a competitor, made peace on advantageous terms with the Eaſt Angles.[n]

In order to reſtore England to ſuch a ſtate of tranquillity as it was then capable of attaining, nought was wanting but the ſubjection of the Northumbrians; who, aſſiſted by the ſcattered Danes in Mercia, continually infeſted the bowels of the kingdom. Edward, in order to divert the force of theſe enemies, prepared a fleet to attack them by ſea; hoping that, when his ſhips appeared on their coaſt, they muſt at leaſt remain at home, and provide for their defence. But the Northumbrians were leſs anxious to ſecure their own property than greedy to commit ſpoil on their enemy; and, concluding that the chief ſtrength of the Engliſh was embarked on board the fleet, they thought the opportunity favourable, and entered Edward's territories with all their forces. The king, who was prepared againſt this event, attacked them on their return at Tetenhall in the county of Stafford, put them to rout, recovered all the booty, and purſued them with great ſlaughter into their own country.

All the reſt of Edward's reign was a ſcene of continued and ſucceſsful action againſt the Northumbrians, the Eaſt Angles, the

Five-burghers, and the foreign Danes, who invaded him from Normandy and Brittany. Nor was he leſs provident in putting his kingdom in a poſture of defence than vigorous in aſſaulting the enemy. He fortified the towns of Cheſter, Eddeſbury, Warwick, Cherbury, Buckingham, Towceſter, Maldon, Huntingdon, and Colcheſter. He fought two ſignal battles at Temsford and Maldon.[o] He vanquiſhed Thurketill, a great Daniſh chief, and obliged him to retire with his followers into France, in queſt of ſpoil and adventures. He ſubdued the Eaſt Angles, and forced them to ſwear allegiance to him. He expelled the two rival princes of Northumberland, Reginald and Sidroc; and acquired, for the preſent, the dominions of that province. Several tribes of the Britons were ſubjected by him; and even the Scots, who, during the reign of Egbert, had, under the conduct of Kenneth their king, increaſed their power by the final ſubjection of the Picts, were nevertheleſs obliged to give him marks of ſubmiſſion.[p] In all theſe fortunate achievements he was aſſiſted by the activity and prudence of his ſiſter Ethelfleda, who was widow of Ethelbert, earl of Mercia; and who, after her huſband's death, retained the government of that province. This princeſs, who had been reduced to extremity in childbed, refuſed afterwards all commerce with her huſband; not from any weak ſuperſtition, as was common in that age, but becauſe ſhe deemed all domeſtic occupations unworthy of her maſculine and ambitious ſpirit.[q] She died before her brother; and Edward, during the remainder of his reign, took upon himſelf the immediate government of Mercia, which before had been intruſted to the authority of a governor.[r] The Saxon chronicle fixes the death of this prince in 925.[s] His kingdom devolved to Athelſtan, his natural ſon.

ATHELSTAN.

925....941.

THE ſtain in this prince's birth was not, in thoſe times, deemed ſo conſiderable as to exclude him from the throne: and Athelſtan, being of an age, as well as of a capacity, fitted for government, obtained the preference to Edward's younger children; who, though legitimate, were of too tender years to rule a nation ſo much expoſed both to foreign invaſion and to domeſtic convulſions. Some diſcontents, however, prevailed on his acceſſion; and Alfred, a nobleman of conſiderable power, was thence encouraged to enter into a conſpiracy againſt him. This incident is related by hiſtorians with circumſtances which the reader, according to the degree of credit he is diſpoſed to give them, may impute either to the invention of monks who forged them, or to their artifice who found means of making them real. Alfred, it is ſaid, being ſeized upon ſtrong ſuſpicions, but without any certain proof, firmly denied the conſpiracy imputed to him; and, in order to juſtify himſelf, he offered to ſwear to his innocence before the pope; whoſe perſon, it was ſuppoſed, contained ſuch ſuperior ſanctity, that no one could preſume to give a falſe oath in his preſence, and yet hope to eſcape the immediate vengeance of Heaven. The king accepted of the condition, and Alfred was conducted to Rome; where, either conſcious of his innocence, or neglecting the ſuperſtition to which he appealed, he ventured to make the oath required of him before John, who then filled the papal chair. But no ſooner had he pronounced the fatal words than he fell into convulſions, of which, three days after, he expired. The king, as if the guilt of the conſpirator were now fully aſcertained, confiſcated his

eſtate, and made a preſent of it to the monaſtery of Malmeſbury;[t] ſecure that no doubts would ever thenceforth be entertained concerning the juſtice of his proceedings.

The dominion of Athelſtan was no ſooner eſtabliſhed over his Engliſh ſubjects than he endeavoured to give ſecurity to the government, by providing againſt the inſurrections of the Danes, which had created ſo much diſturbance to his predeceſſors. He marched into Northumberland; and, finding that the inhabitants bore with impatience the Engliſh yoke, he thought it prudent to confer on Sithric, a Daniſh nobleman, the title of King, and to attach him to his intereſts by giving him his ſiſter Editha in marriage. But this policy proved by accident the ſource of dangerous conſequences. Sithric died in a twelvemonth after; and his two ſons by a former marriage, Anlaf and Godfrid, founding pretenſions on their father's elevation, aſſumed the ſovereignty without waiting for Athelſtan's conſent. They were ſoon expelled by the power of that monarch; and the former took ſhelter in Ireland, as the latter did in Scotland; where he received, during ſome time, protection from Conſtantine, who then enjoyed the crown of that kingdom. The Scottiſh prince, however, continually ſolicited, and even menaced, by Athelſtan, at laſt promiſed to deliver up his gueſt; but, ſecretly deteſting this treachery, he gave Godfrid warning to make his eſcape;[u] and that fugitive, after ſubſiſting by piracy for ſome years, freed the king, by his death, from any farther anxiety. Athelſtan, reſenting Conſtantine's behaviour, entered Scotland with an army; and, ravaging the country with impunity,[w] he reduced the Scots to ſuch diſtreſs that their king was content to preſerve his crown by making ſubmiſſions to the enemy. The Engliſh hiſtorians aſſert[x] that Conſtantine did homage to Athelſtan for his kingdom; and they add that the latter prince, being urged by his courtiers to puſh the preſent favourable opportunity, and entirely ſubdue

Scotland, replied that it was more glorious to confer than conquer kingdoms.[y] But thoſe annals, ſo uncertain and imperfect in themſelves, loſe all credit when national prepoſſeſſions and animoſities have place; and on that account the Scotch hiſtorians, who, without having any more knowledge of the matter, ſtrenuouſly deny the fact, ſeem more worthy of belief.

Conſtantine, whether he owed the retaining of his crown to the moderation of Athelſtan, who was unwilling to employ all his advantages againſt him, or to the policy of that prince, who eſteemed the humiliation of an enemy a greater acquiſition than the ſubjection of a diſcontented and mutinous people, thought the behaviour of the Engliſh monarch more an object of reſentment than of gratitude. He entered into a confederacy with Anlaf, who had collected a great body of Daniſh pirates, whom he found hovering in the Iriſh ſeas; and with ſome Welſh princes, who were terrified at the growing power of Athelſtan: and all theſe allies made, by concert, an irruption with a great army into England. Athelſtan, collecting his forces, met the enemy near Brunſbury in Northumberland, and defeated them in a general engagement. This victory was chiefly aſcribed to the valour of Turketul, the Engliſh chancellor; for in thoſe turbulent ages no one was ſo much occupied in civil employments as wholly to lay aſide the military character.[z]

There is a circumſtance not unworthy of notice, which hiſtorians relate, with regard to the tranſactions of this war. Anlaf, on the approach of the Engliſh army, thought that he could not venture too much to enſure a fortunate event; and, employing the artifice formerly practiſed by Alfred againſt the Danes, he entered the enemy's camp in the habit of a minſtrel. The ſtratagem was for the preſent attended with like ſucceſs. He gave ſuch ſatisfaction to the ſoldiers, who flocked about him, that they introduced him to the king's tent; and Anlaf, having played

before that prince and his nobles during their repaſt, was diſmiſſed with a handſome reward. His prudence kept him from refuſing the preſent; but his pride determined him, on his departure, to bury it, while he fancied that he was uneſpied by all the world. But a ſoldier in Athelſtan's camp, who had formerly ſerved under Anlaf, had been ſtruck with ſome ſuſpicion on the firſt appearance of the minſtrel; and was engaged by curioſity to obſerve all his motions. He regarded this laſt action as a full proof of Anlaf's diſguiſe; and he immediately carried the intelligence to Athelſtan, who blamed him for not ſooner giving him information, that he might have ſeized his enemy. But the ſoldier told him that, as he had formerly ſworn fealty to Anlaf, he could never have pardoned himſelf the treachery of betraying and ruining his ancient maſter; and that Athelſtan himſelf, after ſuch an inſtance of his criminal conduct, would have had equal reaſon to diſtruſt his allegiance. Athelſtan, having praiſed the generoſity of the ſoldier's principles, reflected on the incident, which he foreſaw might be attended with important conſequences. He removed his ſtation in the camp; and, as a biſhop arrived that evening with a reinforcement of troops (for the eccleſiaſtics were then no leſs warlike than the civil magiſtrates), he occupied by his train that very place which had been left vacant by the king's removal. The precaution of Athelſtan was found prudent; for no ſooner had darkneſs fallen than Anlaf broke into the camp, and, haſtening directly to the place where he had left the king's tent, put the biſhop to death before he had time to prepare for his defence.[a]

There fell ſeveral Daniſh and Welſh princes in the action of Brunſbury;[b] and Conſtantine and Anlaf made their eſcape with difficulty, leaving the greater part of their army on the field of battle. After this ſucceſs Athelſtan enjoyed his crown in tranquillity; and he is regarded as one of the ableſt and moſt active

of thoſe ancient princes. He paſſed a remarkable law, (which was calculated for the encouragement of commerce, and which it required ſome liberality of mind in that age to have deviſed) that a merchant, who had made three long ſea voyages on his own account, ſhould be admitted to the rank of a thane or gentleman. This prince died at Gloceſter in the year 941,[c] after a reign of ſixteen years; and was ſucceeded by Edmund, his legitimate brother.

EDMUND.

941....946.

EDMUND, on his acceſſion, met with diſturbance from the reſtleſs Northumbrians, who lay in wait for every opportunity of breaking into rebellion: but, marching ſuddenly with his forces into their country, he ſo overawed the rebels that they endeavoured to appeaſe him by the moſt humble ſubmiſſions.[d] In order to give him the ſurer pledge of their obedience, they offered to embrace Chriſtianity; a religion which the Engliſh Danes had frequently profeſſed when reduced to difficulties, but which, for that very reaſon, they regarded as a badge of ſervitude, and ſhook off as ſoon as a favourable opportunity offered. Edmund, truſting little to their ſincerity in this forced ſubmiſſion, uſed the precaution of removing the Five-burghers from the towns of Mercia, in which they had been allowed to ſettle; becauſe it was always found that they took advantage of every commotion, and introduced the rebellious or foreign Danes into the heart of the kingdom. He alſo conquered Cumberland from the Britons; and conferred that territory on Malcolm, king of Scotland, on condition that he ſhould do him homage for it, and protect the north from all future incurſions of the Danes.

35268

Edmund was young when he came to the crown; yet was his reign ſhort as his death was violent. One day, as he was ſolemnizing a feſtival in the county of Gloceſter, he remarked that Leolf, a notorious robber, whom he had ſentenced to baniſhment, had yet the boldneſs to enter the hall where he himſelf dined, and to ſit at table with his attendants. Enraged at this inſolence, he ordered him to leave the room; but, on his refuſing to obey, the king, whoſe temper, naturally choleric, was inflamed by this additional inſult, leaped on him himſelf, and ſeized him by the hair. But the ruffian, puſhed to extremity, drew his dagger, and gave Edmund a wound, of which he immediately expired. This event happened in the year 946, and in the ſixth year of the king's reign. Edmund left male iſſue, but ſo young that they were incapable of governing the kingdom; and his brother Edred was promoted to the throne.

EDRED.

946....955.

THE reign of this prince, as thoſe of his predeceſſors, was diſturbed by the rebellions and incurſions of the Northumbrian Danes; who, though frequently quelled, were never entirely ſubdued, nor had ever paid a ſincere allegiance to the crown of England. The acceſſion of a new king ſeemed to them a favourable opportunity for ſhaking off the yoke: but, on Edred's appearance with an army, they made him their wonted ſubmiſſions; and the king, having waſted the country with fire and ſword, as a puniſhment of their rebellion, obliged them to renew their oaths of allegiance; and he ſtraight retired with his forces. The obedience of the Danes laſted no longer than the

preſent terror. Provoked at the devaſtations of Edred, and even reduced by neceſſity to ſubſiſt on plunder, they broke into a new rebellion, and were again ſubdued. But the king, now inſtructed by experience, took greater precautions againſt their future revolt. He fixed Engliſh garriſons in their moſt conſiderable towns; and placed over them an Engliſh governor, who might watch all their motions, and ſuppreſs any inſurrection on its firſt appearance. He obliged alſo Malcolm, king of Scotland, to renew his homage for the lands which he held in England.

Edred, though not unwarlike, nor unfit for active life, lay under the influence of the loweſt ſuperſtition, and had blindly delivered over his conſcience to the guidance of Dunſtan, commonly called St. Dunſtan, abbot of Glaſtenbury; whom he advanced to the higheſt offices, and who covered, under the appearance of ſanctity, the moſt violent and moſt inſolent ambition. Taking advantage of the implicit confidence repoſed in him by the king, this churchman imported into England a new order of monks; who much changed the ſtate of eccleſiaſtical affairs, and excited, on their firſt eſtabliſhment, the moſt violent commotions.

From the introduction of Chriſtianity among the Saxons there had been monaſteries in England, and theſe eſtabliſhments had extremely multiplied by the donations of the princes and nobles; whoſe ſuperſtition, derived from their ignorance and precarious life, and increaſed by remorſes for the crimes into which they were ſo frequently betrayed, knew no other expedient for appeaſing the Deity than a profuſe liberality towards the eccleſiaſtics. But the monks had hitherto been a ſpecies of ſecular prieſts, who lived after the manner of the preſent canons or prebendaries, and were both intermingled in ſome degree with the world, and endeavoured to render themſelves uſeful to it. They were employed in the education of youth;[e] they had the diſpo-

ſal of their own time and induſtry; they were not ſubjected to the rigid rules of an order; they had made no vows of implicit obedience to their ſuperiors;[f] and they ſtill retained the choice, without quitting the convent, either of a married or a ſingle life.[g] But a miſtaken piety had produced in Italy a new ſpecies of monks, called Benedictines; who, carrying farther the plauſible principles of mortification, ſecluded themſelves entirely from the world, renounced all claim to liberty, and made a merit of the moſt inviolable chaſtity. Theſe practices and principles, which ſuperſtition at firſt engendered, were greedily embraced and promoted by the policy of the court of Rome. The Roman pontiff, who was making every day great advances towards an abſolute ſovereignty over the eccleſiaſtics, perceived that the celibacy of the clergy alone could break off entirely their connexion with the civil power; and, depriving them of every other object of ambition, engage them to promote, with unceaſing induſtry, the grandeur of their own order. He was ſenſible that, ſo long as the monks were indulged in marriage, and were permitted to rear families, they never could be ſubjected to ſtrict diſcipline, or reduced to that ſlavery under their ſuperiors which was requiſite to procure to the mandates, iſſued from Rome, a ready and zealous obedience. Celibacy, therefore, began to be extolled, as the indiſpenſable duty of prieſts; and the pope undertook to make all the clergy throughout the weſtern world renounce at once the privilege of marriage. A fortunate policy; but at the ſame time an undertaking the moſt difficult of any, ſince he had the ſtrongeſt propenſities of human nature to encounter, and found that the ſame connexions with the female ſex, which generally encourage devotion, were here unfavourable to the ſucceſs of his project. It is no wonder, therefore, that this maſterſtroke of art ſhould have met with violent contradiction, and that the intereſts of the hierarchy, and the inclinations of the

prieſts, being now placed in this ſingular oppoſition, ſhould, notwithſtanding the continued efforts of Rome, have retarded the execution of that bold ſcheme during the courſe of near three centuries.

As the biſhops and parochial clergy lived apart with their families, and were more connected with the world, the hopes of ſucceſs with them were fainter, and the pretence for making them renounce marriage was much leſs plauſible. But the pope, having caſt his eye on the monks as the baſis of his authority, was determined to reduce them under ſtrict rules of obedience; to procure them the credit of ſanctity by an appearance of the moſt rigid mortification; and to break off all their other ties which might interfere with his ſpiritual policy. Under pretence, therefore, of reforming abuſes, which were in ſome degree unavoidable in the ancient eſtabliſhments, he had already ſpread over the ſouthern countries of Europe the ſevere laws of the monaſtic life, and began to form attempts towards a like innovation in England. The favourable opportunity offered itſelf (and it was greedily ſeized), ariſing from the weak ſuperſtition of Edred and the violent impetuous character of Dunſtan.

Dunſtan was born of noble parents in the weſt of England; and, being educated under his uncle Aldhelm, then archbiſhop of Canterbury, had betaken himſelf to the eccleſiaſtical life, and had acquired ſome character in the court of Edmund. He was, however, repreſented to that prince as a man of licentious manners;[h] and, finding his fortune blaſted by theſe ſuſpicions, his ardent ambition prompted him to repair his indiſcretions, by running into an oppoſite extreme. He ſecluded himſelf entirely from the world; he framed a cell ſo ſmall that he could neither ſtand erect in it, nor ſtretch out his limbs during his repoſe: and he here employed himſelf perpetually either in devotion or in manual labour.[i] It is probable that his brain became gradually

crazed by theſe ſolitary occupations, and that his head was filled with chimeras, which, being believed by himſelf and his ſtupid votaries, procured him the general character of ſanctity among the people. He fancied that the devil, among the frequent viſits which he paid him, was one day more earneſt than uſual in his temptations: till Dunſtan, provoked at his importunity, ſeized him by the noſe with a pair of red-hot pincers, as he put his head into the cell; and he held him there till that malignant ſpirit made the whole neighbourhood reſound with his bellowings. This notable exploit was ſeriouſly credited and extolled by the public; it is tranſmitted to poſterity by one who, conſidering the age in which he lived, may paſs for a writer of ſome elegance;[k] and it enſured to Dunſtan a reputation which no real piety, much leſs virtue, could, even in the moſt enlightened period, have ever procured him with the people.

Supported by the character obtained in his retreat, Dunſtan appeared again in the world; and gained ſuch an aſcendant over Edred, who had ſucceeded to the crown, as made him not only the director of that prince's conſcience, but his counſellor in the moſt momentous affairs of government. He was placed at the head of the treaſury;[l] and, being thus poſſeſſed both of power at court and of credit with the populace, he was enabled to attempt with ſucceſs the moſt arduous enterpriſes. Finding that his advancement had been owing to the opinion of his auſterity, he profeſſed himſelf a partiſan of the rigid monaſtic rules; and, after introducing that reformation into the convents of Glaſtenbury and Abingdon, he endeavoured to render it univerſal in the kingdom.

The minds of men were already well prepared for this innovation. The praiſes of an inviolable chaſtity had been carried to the higheſt extravagance by ſome of the firſt preachers of Chriſtianity among the Saxons; the pleaſures of love had been

repreſented as incompatible with Chriſtian perfection; and a total abſtinence from all commerce with the ſex was deemed ſuch a meritorious penance as was ſufficient to atone for the greateſt enormities. The conſequence ſeemed natural, that thoſe at leaſt who officiated at the altar ſhould be clear of this pollution; and, when the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, which was now creeping in,[m] was once fully eſtabliſhed, the reverence to the real body of Chriſt in the euchariſt beſtowed on this argument an additional force and influence. The monks knew how to avail themſelves of all theſe popular topics, and to ſet off their own character to the beſt advantage. They affected the greateſt auſterity of life and manners; they indulged themſelves in the higheſt ſtrains of devotion; they inveighed bitterly againſt the vices and pretended luxury of the age; they were particularly vehement againſt the diſſolute lives of the ſecular clergy, their rivals; every inſtance of libertiniſm in any individual of that order was repreſented as a general corruption; and, where other topics of defamation were wanting, their marriage became a ſure ſubject of invective, and their wives received the name of concubine, or other more opprobrious appellation. The ſecular clergy, on the other hand, who were numerous and rich, and poſſeſſed of the eccleſiaſtical dignities, defended themſelves with vigour, and endeavoured to retaliate upon their adverſaries. The people were thrown into agitation: and few inſtances occur of more violent diſſenſions, excited by the moſt material differences in religion, or rather the moſt frivolous; ſince it is a juſt remark that, the more affinity there is between theological parties, the greater commonly is their animoſity.

The progreſs of the monks, which was become conſiderable, was ſomewhat retarded by the death of Edred, their partiſan, who expired after a reign of nine years.[n] He left children; but,

as they were infants, his nephew Edwy, ſon of Edmund, was placed on the throne.

EDWY.

955....959.

EDWY, at the time of his acceſſion, was not above ſixteen or ſeventeen years of age; was poſſeſſed of the moſt amiable figure; and was even endowed, according to authentic accounts, with the moſt promiſing virtues.[o] He would have been the favourite of his people, had he not unhappily, at the commencement of his reign, been engaged in a controverſy with the monks; whoſe rage neither the graces of the body nor virtues of the mind could mitigate, and who have purſued his memory with the ſame unrelenting vengeance which they exerciſed againſt his perſon and dignity during his ſhort and unfortunate reign. There was a beautiful princeſs of the royal blood, called Elgiva, who had made impreſſion on the tender heart of Edwy: and, as he was of an age when the force of the paſſions firſt begins to be felt, he had ventured, contrary to the advice of his graveſt counſellors and the remonſtrances of the more dignified eccleſiaſtics,[p] to eſpouſe her; though ſhe was within the degrees of affinity prohibited by the canon law.[q] As the auſterity affected by the monks made them particularly violent on this occaſion, Edwy entertained a ſtrong prepoſſeſſion againſt them; and ſeemed on that account determined not to ſecond their project of expelling the ſeculars from all the convents, and of poſſeſſing themſelves of thoſe rich eſtabliſhments. War was therefore declared between the king and the monks; and the former ſoon found reaſon to repent his provoking ſuch dangerous enemies. On the day of his coronation his nobility were aſſembled in a great hall, and

EDWY and ELGIVA.

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Engraved by Isaac Taylor, Jun.

were indulging themſelves in that riot and diſorder which, from the example of their German anceſtors, had become habitual to the Engliſh;[r] when Edwy, attracted by ſofter pleaſures, retired into the queen's apartment, and in that privacy gave reins to his fondneſs towards his wife; which was only moderately checked by the preſence of her mother. Dunſtan conjectured the reaſon of the king's retreat: and, carrying along with him Odo, archbiſhop of Canterbury, over whom he had gained an abſolute aſcendant, he burſt into the apartment; upbraided Edwy with his laſciviouſneſs; probably beſtowed on the queen the moſt opprobrious epithet that can be applied to her ſex; and, tearing him from her arms, puſhed him back, in a diſgraceful manner, into the banquet of the nobles.[s] Edwy, though young, and oppoſed by the prejudices of the people, found an opportunity of taking revenge for this public inſult. He queſtioned Dunſtan concerning the adminiſtration of the treaſury during the reign of his predeceſſor;[t] and, when that miniſter refuſed to give any account of money expended, as he affirmed, by orders of the late king, he accuſed him of malverſation in his office, and baniſhed him the kingdom. But Dunſtan's cabal was not unactive during his abſence. They filled the public with high panegyrics on his ſanctity; they exclaimed againſt the impiety of the king and queen; and, having poiſoned the minds of the people by theſe declamations, they proceeded to ſtill more outrageous acts of violence againſt the royal authority. Archbiſhop Odo ſent into the palace a party of ſoldiers, who ſeized the queen; and, having burned her face with a red-hot iron, in order to deſtroy that fatal beauty which had ſeduced Edwy, they carried her by force into Ireland, there to remain in perpetual exile.[u] Edwy, finding it in vain to reſiſt, was obliged to conſent to his divorce, which was pronounced by Odo;[w] and a cataſtrophe ſtill more diſmal awaited the unhappy Elgiva. That amiable princeſs, being cured

of her wounds, and having even obliterated the ſcars with which Odo had hoped to deface her beauty, returned into England, and was flying to the embraces of the king, whom ſhe ſtill regarded as her huſband; when ſhe fell into the hands of a party, whom the primate had ſent to intercept her. Nothing but her death could now give ſecurity to Odo and the monks; and the moſt cruel death was requiſite to ſatiate their vengeance. She was hamſtringed; and expired a few days after at Gloceſter, in the moſt acute torments.[x]

The Engliſh, blinded with ſuperſtition, inſtead of being ſhocked with his inhumanity, exclaimed that the misfortunes of Edwy and his conſort were a juſt judgment for their diſſolute contempt of the eccleſiaſtical ſtatutes. They even proceeded to rebellion againſt their ſovereign; and, having placed Edgar at their head, the younger brother of Edwy, a boy of thirteen years of age, they ſoon put him in poſſeſſion of Mercia, Northumberland, Eaſt Anglia; and chaſed Edwy into the ſouthern counties. That it might not be doubtful at whoſe inſtigation this revolt was undertaken, Dunſtan returned into England, and took upon him the government of Edgar and his party. He was firſt inſtalled in the ſee of Worceſter, then in that of London,[y] and, on Odo's death, and the violent expulſion of Brithelm his ſucceſſor, in that of Canterbury;[z] of all which he long kept poſſeſſion. Odo is tranſmitted to us by the monks under the character of a man of piety.[a] Dunſtan was even canonized; and is one of thoſe numerous ſaints of the ſame ſtamp who diſgrace the Romiſh calendar. Meanwhile the unhappy Edwy was [a] excommunicated, and purſued with unrelenting vengeance; but his death, which happened ſoon after, freed his enemies from all farther inquietude, and gave Edgar peaceable poſſeſſion of the government.[b]

EDGAR.

959....975.

THIS prince, who mounted the throne in ſuch early youth, ſoon diſcovered an excellent capacity in the adminiſtration of affairs; and his reign is one of the moſt fortunate that we meet with in the ancient Engliſh hiſtory. He ſhewed no averſion to war; he made the wiſeſt preparations againſt invaders; and by this vigour and foreſight he was enabled, without any danger of ſuffering inſults, to indulge his inclination towards peace, and to employ himſelf in ſupporting and improving the internal government of his kingdom. He maintained a body of diſciplined troops; which he quartered in the north, in order to keep the mutinous Northumbrians in ſubjection, and to repel the inroads of the Scots. He built and ſupported a powerful navy;[c] and, that he might retain the ſeamen in the practice of their duty, and always preſent a formidable armament to his enemies, he ſtationed three ſquadrons off the coaſt, and ordered them to make, from time to time, the circuit of his dominions.[d] The foreign Danes dared not to approach a country which appeared in ſuch a poſture of defence; the domeſtic Danes ſaw inevitable deſtruction to be the conſequence of their tumults and inſurrections; the neighbouring ſovereigns, the king of Scotland, the princes of Wales, of the Iſle of Man, of the Orkneys, and even of[e] Ireland, were reduced to pay ſubmiſſion to ſo formidable a monarch. He carried his ſuperiority to a great height; and might have excited an univerſal combination againſt him, had not his power been ſo well eſtabliſhed as to deprive his enemies of all hopes of ſhaking it. It is ſaid that, reſiding once at Cheſter, and having purpoſed to go by water to the abbey of St. John the Baptiſt,

he obliged eight of his tributary princes to row him in a barge upon the Dee.[f] The Engliſh hiſtorians are fond of mentioning the name of Kenneth III. king of Scots, among the number. The Scottiſh hiſtorians either deny the fact, or aſſert that their king, if ever he acknowledged himſelf a vaſſal to Edgar, did him homage, not for his crown, but for the dominions which he held in England.

But the chief means by which Edgar maintained his authority, and preſerved public peace, was the paying of court to Dunſtan and the monks, who had at firſt placed him on the throne; and who, by their pretenſions to ſuperior ſanctity and purity of manners, had acquired an aſcendant over the people. He favoured their ſcheme for diſpoſſeſſing the ſecular canons of all the monaſteries;[g] he beſtowed preferment on none but their partiſans; he allowed Dunſtan to reſign the ſee of Worceſter into the hands of Oſwald, one of his creatures,[h] and to place Ethelwold, another of them, in that of Wincheſter;[i] he conſulted theſe prelates in the adminiſtration of all eccleſiaſtical, and even in that of many civil, affairs; and, though the vigour of his own genius prevented him from being implicitly guided by them, the king and the biſhops found ſuch advantages in their mutual agreement that they always acted in concert, and united their influence in preſerving the peace and tranquillity of the kingdom.

In order to complete the great work of placing the new order of monks in all the convents, Edgar ſummoned a general council of the prelates and the heads of the religious orders. He here inveighed againſt the diſſolute lives of the ſecular clergy; the ſmallneſs of their tonſure, which, it is probable, maintained no longer any reſemblance to the crown of thorns; their negligence in attending the exerciſe of their function; their mixing with the laity in the pleaſures of gaming, hunting, dancing, and ſinging; and their openly living with concubines, by which it is

commonly ſuppoſed he meant their wives. He then turned himſelf to Dunſtan the primate; and, in the name of king Edred, whom he ſuppoſed to look down from heaven with indignation againſt all thoſe enormities, he thus addreſſed him. 'It is you, Dunſtan, by whoſe advice I founded monaſteries, built churches, and expended my treaſure in the ſupport of religion and religious houſes. You were my counſellor and aſſiſtant in all my ſchemes; you were the director of my conſcience; to you I was obedient in all things. When did you call for ſupplies which I refuſed you? Was my aſſiſtance ever wanting to the poor? Did I deny ſupport and eſtabliſhments to the clergy and the convents? Did I not hearken to your inſtructions, who told me that theſe charities were, of all others, the moſt grateful to my Maker, and fixed a perpetual fund for the ſupport of religion? And are all our pious endeavours now fruſtrated by the diſſolute lives of the prieſts? Not that I throw any blame on you; you have reaſoned, beſought, inculcated, inveighed: but it now behoves you to uſe ſharper and more vigorous remedies; and, conjoining your ſpiritual authority with the civil power, to purge effectually the temple of God from thieves and [k] intruders.' It is eaſy to imagine that this harangue had the deſired effect; and that, when the king and prelates thus concurred with the popular prejudices, it was not long before the monks prevailed, and eſtabliſhed their new diſcipline in almoſt all the convents.

We may remark that the declamations againſt the ſecular clergy are, both here and in all the hiſtorians, conveyed in general terms; and, as that order of men are commonly reſtrained by the decency of their character, it is difficult to believe that the complaints againſt their diſſolute manners could be ſo univerſally juſt as is pretended. It is more probable that the monks paid court to the populace by an affected auſterity of life; and, repreſenting the moſt innocent liberties taken by the other clergy

as great and unpardonable enormities, thereby prepared the way for the increaſe of their own power and influence. Edgar, however, like a true politician, concurred with the prevailing party; and he even indulged them in pretenſions which, though they might, when complied with, engage the monks to ſupport royal authority during his own reign, proved afterwards dangerous to his ſucceſſors, and gave diſturbance to the whole civil power. He ſeconded the policy of the court of Rome in granting to ſome monaſteries an exemption from epiſcopal juriſdiction; he allowed the convents, even thoſe of royal foundation, to uſurp the election of their own abbot; and he admitted their forgeries of ancient charters, by which, from the pretended grant of former kings, they aſſumed many privileges and immunities.[l]

Theſe merits of Edgar have procured him the higheſt panegyrics from the monks; and he is tranſmitted to us, not only under the character of a conſummate ſtateſman and an active prince, praiſes to which he ſeems to have been juſtly entitled, but under that of a great ſaint and a man of virtue. But nothing could more betray both his hypocriſy in inveighing againſt the licentiouſneſs of the ſecular clergy, and the intereſted ſpirit of his partiſans in beſtowing ſuch eulogies on his piety, than the uſual tenour of his conduct; which was licentious to the higheſt degree, and violated every law, human and divine. Yet thoſe very monks, who, as we are told by Ingulf, a very ancient hiſtorian, had no idea of any moral or religious merit, except chaſtity and obedience, not only connived at his enormities, but loaded him with the greateſt praiſes. Hiſtory, however, has preſerved ſome inſtances of his amours; from which, as from a ſpecimen, we may form a conjecture of the reſt.

Edgar broke into a convent, carried off Editha, a nun, by force, and even committed violence on her perſon.[m] For this act of ſacrilege he was reprimanded by Dunſtan; and, that he

might reconcile himſelf to the church, he was obliged not to ſeparate from his miſtreſs, but to abſtain from wearing his crown during ſeven years, and to deprive himſelf ſo long of that vain ornament.[n] A puniſhment very unequal to that which had been inflicted on the unfortunate Edwy; who, for a marriage which in the ſtricteſt ſenſe could only deſerve the name of irregular, was expelled his kingdom, ſaw his queen treated with ſingular barbarity, was loaded with calumnies, and has been repreſented to us under the moſt odious colours. Such is the aſcendant which may be attained by hypocriſy and cabal over mankind!

There was another miſtreſs of Edgar's, with whom he firſt formed a connexion by a kind of accident. Paſſing one day by Andover, he lodged in the houſe of a nobleman; whoſe daughter, being endowed with all the graces of perſon and behaviour, inflamed him at firſt ſight with the higheſt deſire; and he reſolved by any expedient to gratify it. As he had not leiſure to employ courtſhip or addreſs for attaining his purpoſe, he went directly to her mother, declared the violence of his paſſion, and deſired that the young lady might be allowed to paſs that very night with him. The mother was a woman of virtue, and determined not to diſhonour her daughter and her family by compliance; but, being well acquainted with the impetuoſity of the king's temper, ſhe thought it would be eaſier, as well as ſafer, to deceive than refuſe him. She feigned therefore a ſubmiſſion to his will; but ſecretly ordered a waiting maid, of no diſagreeable figure, to ſteal into the king's bed after all the company ſhould be retired to reſt. In the morning, before daybreak, the damſel, agreeably to the injunctions of her miſtreſs, offered to retire; but Edgar, who had no reſerve in his pleaſures, and whoſe love to his bedfellow was rather inflamed by enjoyment, refuſed his conſent, and employed force and entreaties to detain her. Elfleda (for that was the name of the maid), truſting to her own

charms, and to the love with which ſhe hoped ſhe had now inſpired the king, made probably but a faint reſiſtance; and the return of light diſcovered the deceit to Edgar. He had paſſed a night ſo much to his ſatisfaction that he expreſſed no diſpleaſure with the old lady on account of her fraud; his love was tranſferred to Elfleda; ſhe became his favourite miſtreſs, and maintained her aſcendant over him till his marriage with Elfrida.°

The circumſtances of his marriage with this lady were more ſingular and more criminal. Elfrida was daughter and heir of Olgar, earl of Devonſhire; and, though ſhe had been educated in the country, and had never appeared at court, ſhe had filled all England with the reputation of her beauty. Edgar himſelf, who was indifferent to no accounts of this nature, found his curioſity excited by the frequent panegyrics which he heard of Elfrida; and, reflecting on her noble birth, he reſolved, if he found her charms anſwerable to their fame, to obtain poſſeſſion of her on honourable terms. He communicated his intention to earl Athelwold, his favourite; but uſed the precaution, before he made any advances to her parents, to order that nobleman, on ſome pretence, to pay them a viſit, and to bring him a certain account of the beauty of their daughter. Athelwold, when introduced to the young lady, found general report to have fallen ſhort of the truth; and, being actuated by the moſt vehement love, he determined to ſacrifice to this new paſſion his fidelity to his maſter, and to the truſt repoſed in him. He returned to Edgar, and told him that the riches alone, and high quality of Elfrida, had been the ground of the admiration paid her; and that her charms, far from being anywiſe extraordinary, would have been overlooked in a woman of inferior ſtation. When he had, by this deceit, diverted the king from his purpoſe, he took an opportunity, after ſome interval, of turning again the converſation on Elfrida. He remarked that, though the parentage

and fortune of the lady had not produced on him, as on others, any illuſion with regard to her beauty, he could not forbear reflecting that ſhe would, on the whole, be an advantageous match for him, and might, by her birth and riches, make him ſufficient compenſation for the homelineſs of her perſon. If the king, therefore, gave his approbation, he was determined to make propoſals in his own behalf to the earl of Devonſhire; and doubted not to obtain his, as well as the young lady's, conſent to the marriage. Edgar, pleaſed with an expedient for eſtabliſhing his favourite's fortune, not only exhorted him to execute his purpoſe, but forwarded his ſucceſs by his recommendations to the parents of Elfrida; and Athelwold was ſoon made happy in the poſſeſſion of his miſtreſs. Dreading, however, the detection of the artifice, he employed every pretence for detaining Elfrida in the country, and for keeping her at a diſtance from Edgar.

The violent paſſion of Athelwold had rendered him blind to the neceſſary conſequences which muſt attend his conduct, and the advantages which the numerous enemies that always purſue a royal favourite would, by its means, be able to make againſt him. Edgar was ſoon informed of the truth; but, before he would execute vengeance on Athelwold's treachery, he reſolved to ſatisfy himſelf with his own eyes of the certainty and full extent of his guilt. He told him that he intended to pay him a viſit in his caſtle, and be introduced to the acquaintance of his new married wife; and Athelwold, as he could not refuſe the honour, only craved leave to go before him a few hours, that he might the better prepare every thing for his reception. He then diſcovered the whole matter to Elfrida; and begged her, if ſhe had any regard either to her own honour or his life, to conceal from Edgar, by every circumſtance of dreſs and behaviour, that fatal beauty which had ſeduced him from fidelity to his friend, and had betrayed him into ſo many falſehoods. Elfrida

promiſed compliance, though nothing was farther from her intentions. She deemed herſelf little beholden to Athelwold for a paſſion which had deprived her of a crown; and, knowing the force of her own charms, ſhe did not deſpair even yet of reaching that dignity, of which her huſband's artifice had bereaved her. She appeared before the king with all the advantages which the richeſt attire and the moſt engaging airs could beſtow upon her; and ſhe excited at once in his boſom the higheſt love towards herſelf and the moſt furious deſire of revenge againſt her huſband. He knew, however, to diſſemble theſe paſſions; and, ſeducing Athelwold into a wood, on pretence of hunting, he ſtabbed him with his own hand, and ſoon after publicly eſpouſed Elfrida.[p]

Before we conclude our account of this reign, we muſt mention two circumſtances which are remarked by hiſtorians. The reputation of Edgar allured a great number of foreigners to viſit his court; and he gave them encouragement to ſettle in England.[q] We are told that they imported all the vices of their reſpective countries, and contributed to corrupt the ſimple manners of the natives.[r] But, as this ſimplicity of manners, ſo highly and often ſo injudiciouſly extolled, did not preſerve them from barbarity and treachery, the greateſt of all vices, and the moſt incident to a rude uncultivated people, we ought perhaps to deem their acquaintance with foreigners rather an advantage; as it tended to enlarge their views, and to cure them of thoſe illiberal prejudices and ruſtic manners to which iſlanders are often ſubject.

Another remarkable incident of this reign was the extirpation of wolves from England. This advantage was attained by the induſtrious policy of Edgar. He took great pains in hunting and purſuing thoſe ravenous animals; and, when he found that all that eſcaped him had taken ſhelter in the mountains and foreſts

of Wales, he changed the tribute of money impoſed on the Welſh princes by Athelſtan, his predeceſſor,[s] into an annual tribute of three hundred heads of wolves; which produced ſuch diligence in hunting them that the animal has been no more ſeen in this iſland.

Edgar died after a reign of ſixteen years, and in the thirty-third of his age. He was ſucceeded by Edward, whom he had by his firſt marriage with the daughter of earl Ordmer.

EDWARD THE MARTYR.

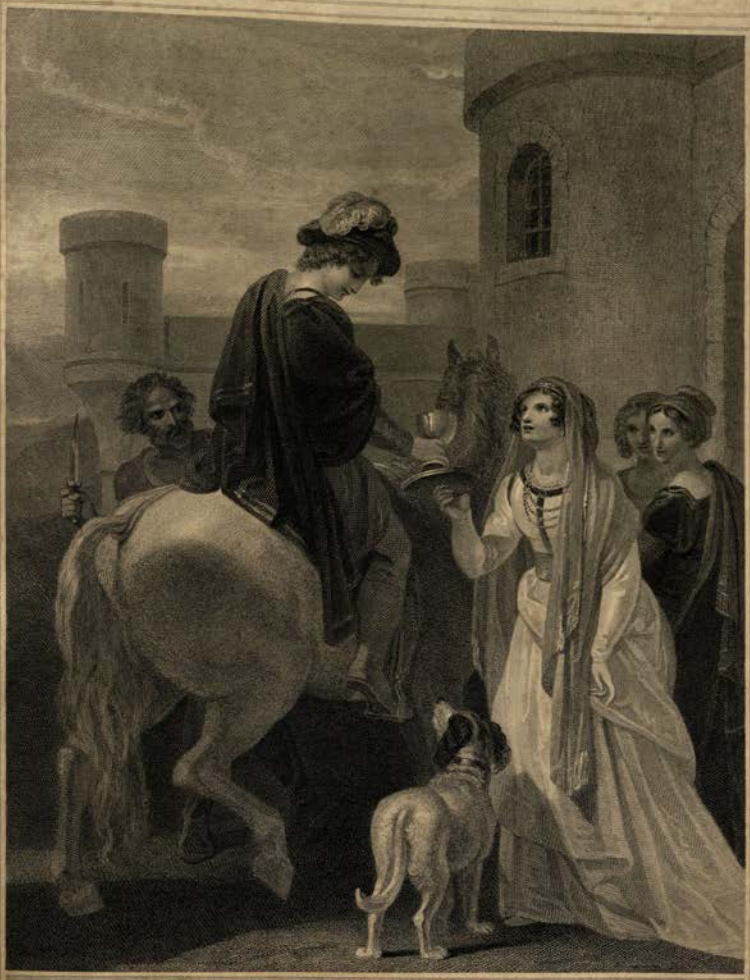
975....979.

THE ſucceſſion of this prince, who was only fifteen years of age at his father's death, did not take place without much difficulty and oppoſition. Elfrida, his ſtep-mother, had a ſon, Ethelred, ſeven years old, whom ſhe attempted to raiſe to the throne. She affirmed that Edgar's marriage with the mother of Edward was expoſed to inſuperable objections; and, as ſhe had poſſeſſed great credit with her huſband, ſhe had found means to acquire partiſans, who ſeconded all her pretenſions. But the title of Edward was ſupported by many advantages. He was appointed ſucceſſor by the will of his father;[t] he was approaching to man's eſtate, and might ſoon be able to take into his own hands the reins of government. The principal nobility, dreading the imperious temper of Elfrida, were averſe to her ſon's government, which muſt enlarge her authority, and probably put her in poſſeſſion of the regency. Above all, Dunſtan, whoſe character of ſanctity had given him the higheſt credit with the people, had eſpouſed the cauſe of Edward, over whom he had already acquired a great aſcendant;[u] and he was determined to execute the will of Edgar

in his favour. To cut off all oppoſite pretenſions, Dunſtan reſolutely anointed and crowned the young prince at Kingſton; and the whole kingdom, without farther diſpute, ſubmitted to him.[x]

It was of great importance to Dunſtan and the monks to place on the throne a king favourable to their cauſe. The ſecular clergy had ſtill partiſans in England, who wiſhed to ſupport them in the poſſeſſion of the convents and of the eccleſiaſtical authority. On the firſt intelligence of Edgar's death Alfere, duke of Mercia, expelled the new orders of monks from all the monaſteries which lay within his juriſdiction;[y] but Elfwin, duke of Eaſt Anglia, and Brithnot, duke of the Eaſt Saxons, protected them within their territories, and inſiſted upon the execution of the late laws enacted in their favour. In order to ſettle this controverſy there were ſummoned ſeveral ſynods, which, according to the practice of thoſe times, conſiſted partly of eccleſiaſtical members, partly of the lay nobility. The monks were able to prevail in theſe aſſemblies; though, as it appears, contrary to the ſecret wiſhes, if not the declared inclination, of the leading men in the nation.[z] They had more invention in forging miracles to ſupport their cauſe; or, having been ſo fortunate as to obtain, by their pretended auſterities, the character of piety, their miracles were more credited by the populace.

In one ſynod Dunſtan, finding the majority of votes againſt him, roſe up, and informed the audience that he had that inſtant received an immediate revelation in behalf of the monks. The aſſembly was ſo aſtoniſhed at this intelligence, or probably ſo overawed by the populace, that they proceeded no farther in their deliberations. In another ſynod a voice iſſued from the crucifix, and informed the members that the eſtabliſhment of the monks was founded on the will of Heaven, and could not be oppoſed without impiety.[a] But the miracle performed in the third ſynod was ſtill more alarming. The floor of the hall in



TREACHERY OF ELFRIDA.

which the aſſembly met ſunk of a ſudden, and a great number of the members were either bruiſed or killed by the fall. It was remarked that Dunſtan had that day prevented the king from attending the ſynod, and that the beam on which his own chair ſtood was the only one that did not ſink under the weight of the aſſembly.[b] But theſe circumſtances, inſtead of begetting any ſuſpicion of contrivance, were regarded as the ſureſt proof of the immediate interpoſition of Providence in behalf of thoſe favourites of Heaven.

Edward lived four years after his acceſſion, and there paſſed nothing memorable during his reign. His death alone was memorable and tragical.[c] This young prince was endowed with the moſt amiable innocence of manners; and, as his own intentions were always pure, he was incapable of entertaining any ſuſpicion againſt others. Though his ſtep-mother had oppoſed his ſucceſſion, and had raiſed a party in favour of her own ſon, he always ſhewed her marks of regard; and even expreſſed, on all occaſions, the moſt tender affection towards his brother. He was hunting one day in Dorſetſhire; and, being led by the chaſe near Corfe caſtle, where Elfrida reſided, he took the opportunity of paying her a viſit, unattended by any of his retinue; and he thereby preſented her with the opportunity which ſhe had long wiſhed for. After he had mounted his horſe he deſired ſome liquor to be brought him. While he was holding the cup to his head a ſervant of Elfrida approached him, and gave him a ſtab behind. The prince, finding himſelf wounded, put ſpurs to his horſe; but, becoming faint by loſs of blood, he fell from the ſaddle, his foot ſtuck in the ſtirrup, and he was dragged along by his unruly horſe till he expired. Being tracked by the blood, his body was found, and was privately interred at Wareham by his ſervants.

The youth and innocence of this prince, with his tragical death, begat ſuch compaſſion among the people, that they be-

lieved miracles to be wrought at his tomb; and they gave him the appellation of martyr, though his murder had no connexion with any religious principle or opinion. Elfrida built monaſteries, and performed many penances, in order to atone for her guilt; but could never, by all her hypocriſy or remorſes, recover the good opinion of the public, though ſo eaſily deluded in thoſe ignorant ages.

CHAPTER III.

979....1066.

ETHELRED....SETTLEMENT OF THE NORMANS....EDMUND IRONSIDE ....CANUTE....HAROLD HAREFOOT....HARDICANUTE....EDWARD THE CONFESSOR....HAROLD.

ETHELRED.

979....1016.

THE freedom which England had ſo long enjoyed, from the depredations of the Danes, ſeems to have proceeded partly from the eſtabliſhments which that piratical nation had obtained in the north of France, and which employed all their ſuperfluous hands to people and maintain them; partly from the vigour and warlike ſpirit of a long race of Engliſh princes, who preſerved the kingdom in a poſture of defence by ſea and land, and either prevented or repelled every attempt of the invaders. But, a new generation of men being now ſprung up in the northern regions, who could no longer diſburden themſelves on Normandy, the Engliſh had reaſon to dread that the Danes would again viſit an iſland, to which they were invited both by the memory of their paſt ſucceſſes, and by the expectation of aſſiſtance from their

countrymen; who, though long eſtabliſhed in the kingdom, were not yet thoroughly incorporated with the natives, nor had entirely forgotten their inveterate habits of war and depredation. And, as the reigning prince was a minor, and even when he attained to man's eſtate never diſcovered either courage or capacity ſufficient to govern his own ſubjects, much leſs to repel a formidable enemy, the people might juſtly apprehend the worſt calamities from ſo dangerous a criſis.

The Danes, before they durſt attempt any important enterpriſe againſt England, made an inconſiderable deſcent by way of trial; and, having landed from ſeven veſſels near Southampton, they ravaged the country, enriched themſelves by ſpoil, and departed with impunity. Six years after they made a like attempt in the weſt, and met with like ſucceſs. The invaders, having now found affairs in a very different ſituation from that in which they formerly appeared, encouraged their countrymen to aſſemble a greater force, and to hope for more conſiderable advantages. They landed in Eſſex under the command of two leaders; and, having defeated and ſlain, at Maldon, Brithnot, duke of that county, who ventured with a ſmall body to attack them, they ſpread their devaſtations over all the neighbouring provinces. In this extremity Ethelred, to whom hiſtorians give the epithet of the Unready, inſtead of rouſing his people to defend with courage their honour and their property, hearkened to the advice of Siricius, archbiſhop of Canterbury, which was ſeconded by many of the degenerate nobility; and, paying the enemy the ſum of ten thouſand pounds, he bribed them to depart the kingdom. This ſhameful expedient was attended with the ſucceſs which might be expected. The Danes next year appeared off the eaſtern coaſt, in hopes of ſubduing a people who defended themſelves by their money, which invited aſſailants, inſtead of their arms, which repelled them. But the Engliſh, ſenſible of their

folly, had, in the interval, aſſembled in a great council, and had determined to collect at London a fleet able to give battle to the enemy;[d] though that judicious meaſure failed of ſucceſs, from the treachery of Alfric, duke of Mercia, whoſe name is infamous in the annals of that age by the calamities which his repeated perfidy brought upon his country. This nobleman had, in 983, ſucceeded to his father Alfere in that extenſive command; but, being deprived of it two years after, and baniſhed the kingdom, he was obliged to employ all his intrigue, and all his power, which was too great for a ſubject, to be reſtored to his country and reinſtated in his authority. Having had experience of the credit and malevolence of his enemies, he thenceforth truſted for ſecurity, not to his ſervices, or to the affections of his fellow citizens, but to the influence which he had obtained over his vaſſals, and to the public calamities; which he thought muſt, in every revolution, render his aſſiſtance neceſſary. Having fixed this reſolution, he determined to prevent all ſuch ſucceſſes as might eſtabliſh the royal authority, or render his own ſituation dependent or precarious. As the Engliſh had formed the plan of ſurrounding and deſtroying the Daniſh fleet in harbour, he privately informed the enemy of their danger; and, when they put to ſea in conſequence of this intelligence, he deſerted to them, with the ſquadron under his command, the night before the engagement, and thereby diſappointed all the efforts of his countrymen.[e] Ethelred, enraged at his perfidy, ſeized his ſon Alfgar, and ordered his eyes to be put out.[f] But ſuch was the power of Alfric that he again forced himſelf into authority; and, though he had given this ſpecimen of his character, and received this grievous provocation, it was found neceſſary to intruſt him anew with the government of Mercia. This conduct of the court, which in all its circumſtances is ſo barbarous, weak, and imprudent, both merited and prognoſticated the moſt grievous calamities.

The northern invaders, now well acquainted with the defenceleſs condition of England, made a powerful deſcent under the command of Sweyn king of Denmark and Olave king of Norway; and, ſailing up the Humber, ſpread on all ſides their deſtructive ravages. Lindeſey was laid waſte; Banbury was deſtroyed; and all the Northumbrians, though moſtly of Daniſh deſcent, were conſtrained either to join the invaders or to ſuffer under their depredations. A powerful army was aſſembled to oppoſe the Danes, and a general action enſued: but the Engliſh were deſerted in the battle, from the cowardice or treachery of their three leaders, all of them men of Daniſh race; Frena, Frithegiſt, and Godwin; who gave the example of a ſhameful flight to the troops under their command.

Encouraged by this ſucceſs, and ſtill more by the contempt which it inſpired for their enemy, the pirates ventured to attack the centre of the kingdom; and, entering the Thames in ninety-four veſſels, laid ſiege to London, and threatened it with total deſtruction. But the citizens, alarmed at the danger, and firmly united among themſelves, made a bolder defence than the cowardice of the nobility and gentry gave the invaders reaſon to apprehend; and the beſiegers, after ſuffering the greateſt hardſhips, were finally fruſtrated in their attempt. In order to revenge themſelves, they laid waſte Eſſex, Suſſex, and Hampſhire; and, having there procured horſes, they were thereby enabled to ſpread, through the more inland counties, the fury of their depredations. In this extremity Ethelred and his nobles had recourſe to the former expedient; and, ſending ambaſſadors to the two northern kings, they promiſed them ſubſiſtence and tribute, on condition they would, for the preſent, put an end to their ravages, and ſoon after depart the kingdom. Sweyn and Olave agreed to the terms, and peaceably took up their quarters at Southampton, where the ſum of ſixteen thouſand pounds was

paid to them. Olave even made a journey to Andover, where Ethelred reſided; and he received the rite of confirmation from the Engliſh biſhops, as well as many rich preſents from the king. He here promiſed that he would never more infeſt the Engliſh territories; and he faithfully fulfilled the engagement. This prince receives the appellation of St. Olave from the church of Rome; and, notwithſtanding the general preſumption which lies either againſt the underſtanding or morals of every one who in thoſe ignorant ages was dignified with that title, he ſeems to have been a man of merit and of virtue. Sweyn, though leſs ſcrupulous than Olave, was conſtrained, upon the departure of the Norwegian prince, to evacuate alſo the kingdom with all his followers.

This compoſition brought only a ſhort interval to the miſeries of the Engliſh. The Daniſh pirates appeared ſoon after in the Severn; and, having committed ſpoil in Wales as well as in Cornwall and Devonſhire, they ſailed round to the ſouth coaſt, and, entering the Tamar, completed the devaſtation of theſe two counties. They then returned to the Briſtol channel; and, penetrating into the country by the Avon, ſpread themſelves over all that neighbourhood, and carried fire and ſword even into Dorſetſhire. They next changed the ſeat of war; and, after ravaging the Iſle of Wight, they entered the Thames and Medway, and laid ſiege to Rocheſter; where they defeated the Kentiſh men in a pitched battle. After this victory the whole province of Kent was made a ſcene of ſlaughter, fire, and devaſtation. The extremity of theſe miſeries forced the Engliſh into counſels for common defence both by ſea and land; but the weakneſs of the king, the diviſions among the nobility, the treachery of ſome, the cowardice of others, the want of concert in all, fruſtrated every endeavour. Their fleets and armies either came too late to attack the enemy, or were repulſed with diſhonour; and the people were thus

equally ruined by reſiſtance or by ſubmiſſion. The Engliſh, therefore, deſtitute both of prudence and unanimity in council, of courage and conduct in the field, had recourſe to the ſame weak expedient which by experience they had already found ſo ineffectual; they offered the Danes to buy peace, by paying them a large ſum of money. Theſe ravagers roſe continually in their demands; and now required the payment of twenty-four thouſand pounds, to which the Engliſh were ſo mean and imprudent as to ſubmit.[g] The departure of the Danes procured them another ſhort interval of repoſe; which they enjoyed, as if it were to be perpetual, without making any effectual preparations for a more vigorous reſiſtance upon the next return of the enemy.

Beſides receiving this ſum, the Danes were engaged by another motive to depart a kingdom which appeared ſo little in a ſituation to reſiſt their efforts. They were invited over by their countrymen in Normandy, who at this time were hard preſſed by the arms of Robert king of France, and who found it difficult to defend the ſettlement which, with ſo much advantage to themſelves and glory to their nation, they had made in that country. It is probable alſo that Ethelred, obſerving the cloſe connexions thus maintained among all the Danes, however divided in government or ſituation, was deſirous of forming an alliance with that formidable people. For this purpoſe, being now a widower, he made his addreſſes to Emma, ſiſter to Richard II. duke of Normandy; and he ſoon ſucceeded in his negociation. The princeſs came over in the year 1001 to England, and was married to Ethelred.[h]

In the end of the ninth and beginning of the tenth century (when the north, not yet exhauſted by that multitude of people, or rather nations, which ſhe had ſucceſſively emitted, ſent forth a new race, not of conquerors, as before, but of pirates and ravagers, who infeſted the countries poſſeſſed by her once warlike

ſons) lived Rollo, a petty prince or chieftain of Denmark, whoſe valour and abilities ſoon engaged the attention of his countrymen. He was expoſed in his youth to the jealouſy of the king of Denmark, who attacked his ſmall but independent principality; and who, being foiled in every aſſault, had recourſe at laſt to perfidy for effecting his purpoſe, which he had often attempted in vain by force of arms.[i] He lulled Rollo into ſecurity by an inſidious peace; and, falling ſuddenly upon him, murdered his brother and his braveſt officers, and forced him to fly for ſafety into Scandinavia. Here many of his ancient ſubjects, induced partly by affection to their prince, partly by the oppreſſions of the Daniſh monarch, ranged themſelves under his ſtandard, and offered to follow him in every enterpriſe. Rollo, inſtead of attempting to recover his paternal dominions, where he muſt expect a vigorous reſiſtance from the Danes, determined to purſue an eaſier, but more important, undertaking; and to make his fortune, in imitation of his countrymen, by pillaging the richer and more ſouthern coaſts of Europe. He collected a body of troops, which, like that of all thoſe ravagers, was compoſed of Norwegians, Swedes, Friſians, Danes, and adventurers of all nations; who, being accuſtomed to a roving unſettled life, took delight in nothing but war and plunder. His reputation brought him aſſociates from all quarters; and a viſion, which he pretended to have appeared to him in his ſleep, and which, according to his interpretation of it, prognoſticated the greateſt ſucceſſes, proved alſo a powerful incentive with thoſe ignorant and ſuperſtitious people.[k]

The firſt attempt made by Rollo was on England, near the end of Alfred's reign; when that great monarch, having ſettled Guthrum and his followers in Eaſt Anglia, and others of thoſe freebooters in Northumberland, and having reſtored peace to his haraſſed country, had eſtabliſhed the moſt excellent military as

well as civil inſtitutions among the Engliſh. The prudent Dane, finding that no advantages could be gained over ſuch a people, governed by ſuch a prince, ſoon turned his enterpriſes againſt France, which he found more expoſed to his inroads;[l] and, during the reigns of Eudes, an uſurper, and of Charles the Simple, a weak prince, he committed the moſt deſtructive ravages both on the inland and maritime provinces of that kingdom. The French, having no means of defence againſt a leader who united all the valour of his countrymen with the policy of more civilized nations, were obliged to ſubmit to the expedient practiſed by Alfred, and to offer the invaders a ſettlement in ſome of thoſe provinces which they had depopulated by their arms.[m]

The reaſon why the Danes for many years purſued meaſures ſo different from thoſe which had been embraced by the Goths, Vandals, Franks, Burgundians, Lombards, and other northern conquerors, was the great difference in the method of attack which was practiſed by theſe ſeveral nations, and to which the nature of their reſpective ſituations neceſſarily confined them. The latter tribes, living in an inland country, made incurſions by land upon the Roman empire; and, when they entered far into the frontiers, they were obliged to carry along with them their wives and families, whom they had no hopes of ſoon reviſiting, and who could not otherwiſe participate of their plunder. This circumſtance quickly made them think of forcing a ſettlement in the provinces which they had overrun; and theſe barbarians, ſpreading themſelves over the country, found an intereſt in protecting the property and induſtry of the people whom they had ſubdued. But the Danes and Norwegians, invited by their maritime ſituation, and obliged to maintain themſelves in their uncultivated country by fiſhing, had acquired ſome experience of navigation; and in their military excurſions purſued the method practiſed againſt the Roman empire by the more early Saxons.

They made deſcents in ſmall bodies from their ſhips, or rather boats; and, ravaging the coaſts, returned with the booty to their families, which they could not conveniently carry along with them in thoſe hazardous enterpriſes. But, when they increaſed their armaments, made incurſions into the inland countries, and found it ſafe to remain longer in the midſt of the enfeebled enemy, they had been accuſtomed to crowd their veſſels with their wives and children; and, having no longer any temptation to return to their own country, they willingly embraced an opportunity of ſettling in the warm climates and cultivated fields of the ſouth.

Affairs were in this ſituation with Rollo and his followers when Charles propoſed to relinquiſh to them part of the province formerly called Neuſtria, and to purchaſe peace on theſe hard conditions. After all the terms were fully ſettled there appeared only one circumſtance ſhocking to the haughty Dane. He was required to do homage to Charles for this province, and to put himſelf in that humiliating poſture impoſed on vaſſals by the rites of the feudal law. He long refuſed to ſubmit to this indignity; but, being unwilling to loſe ſuch important advantages for a mere ceremony, he made a ſacrifice of his pride to his intereſt, and acknowledged himſelf, in form, the vaſſal of the French monarch.[n] Charles gave him his daughter Giſla in marriage; and, that he might bind him faſter to his intereſts, made him a donation of a conſiderable territory beſides that which he was obliged to ſurrender to him by his ſtipulations. When ſome of the French nobles informed him that, in return for ſo generous a preſent, it was expected that he ſhould throw himſelf at the king's feet, and make ſuitable acknowledgments for his bounty, Rollo replied that he would rather decline the preſent; and it was with ſome difficulty they could perſuade him to make that compliment by one of his captains. The Dane commiſſioned for this purpoſe, full

of indignation at the order, and deſpiſing ſo unwarlike a prince, caught Charles by the foot; and, pretending to carry it to his mouth that he might kiſs it, overthrew him before all his courtiers. The French, ſenſible of their preſent weakneſs, found it prudent to overlook this inſult.[o]

Rollo, who was now in the decline of life, and was tired of wars and depredations, applied himſelf, with mature counſels, to the ſettlement of his new acquired territory, which was thenceforth called Normandy; and he parcelled it out among his captains and followers. He followed, in this partition, the cuſtoms of the feudal law; which was then univerſally eſtabliſhed in the ſouthern countries of Europe, and which ſuited the peculiar circumſtances of that age. He treated the French ſubjects, who ſubmitted to him, with mildneſs and juſtice; he reclaimed his ancient followers from their ferocious violence; he eſtabliſhed law and order throughout his ſtate; and, after a life ſpent in tumults and ravages, he died peaceably in a good old age, and left his dominions to his poſterity.[p]

William I. who ſucceeded him, governed the duchy twenty-five years; and during that time the Normans were thoroughly intermingled with the French; had acquired their language; had imitated their manners; and had made ſuch progreſs towards cultivation that, on the death of William, his ſon Richard, though a minor,[q] inherited his dominions. A ſure proof that the Normans were already ſomewhat advanced in civility, and that their government could now reſt ſecure on its laws and civil inſtitutions, and was not wholly ſuſtained by the abilities of the ſovereign. Richard, after a long reign of fifty-four years, was ſucceeded by his ſon, of the ſame name, in the year 996;[r] which was eighty-five years after the firſt eſtabliſhment of the Normans in France. This was the duke who gave his ſiſter Emma in marriage to Ethelred, king of England, and who thereby formed

connexions with a country which his poſterity was ſo ſoon after deſtined to ſubdue.

The Danes had been eſtabliſhed during a longer period in England than in France; and, though the ſimilarity of their original language to that of the Saxons invited them to a more early coalition with the natives, they had hitherto found ſo little example of civilized manners among the Engliſh, that they retained all their ancient ferocity, and valued themſelves only on their national character of military bravery. The recent as well as more ancient achievements of their countrymen tended to ſupport this idea; and the Engliſh princes, particularly Athelſtan and Edgar, ſenſible of that ſuperiority, had been accuſtomed to keep in pay bodies of Daniſh troops, who were quartered about the country, and committed many violences upon the inhabitants. Theſe mercenaries had attained to ſuch a height of luxury, according to the old Engliſh writers,[s] that they combed their hair once a day, bathed themſelves once a week, changed their clothes frequently; and by all theſe arts of effeminacy, as well as by their military character, had rendered themſelves ſo agreeable to the fair ſex, that they debauched the wives and daughters of the Engliſh, and diſhonoured many families. But what moſt provoked the inhabitants was, that, inſtead of defending them againſt invaders, they were ever ready to betray them to the foreign Danes, and to aſſociate themſelves with all ſtraggling parties of that nation. The animoſity between the inhabitants of Engliſh and Daniſh race had, from theſe repeated injuries, riſen to a great height; when Ethelred, from a policy incident to weak princes, embraced the cruel reſolution of maſſacring the latter throughout all his dominions.[t] Secret orders were diſpatched to commence the execution every where on the ſame day; and the feſtival of St. Brice, which fell on a Sunday, the day on which the Danes uſually bathed themſelves, was choſen for that pur-

poſe. It is needleſs to repeat the accounts tranſmitted concerning the barbarity of this maſſacre: the rage of the populace, excited by ſo many injuries, ſanctified by authority, and ſtimulated by example, diſtinguiſhed not between innocence and guilt; ſpared neither ſex nor age; and was not ſatiated without the tortures as well as death of the unhappy victims. Even Gunilda, ſiſter to the king of Denmark, who had married earl Paling, and had embraced Chriſtianity, was, by the advice of Edric, earl of Wilts, ſeized and condemned to death by Ethelred, after ſeeing her huſband and children butchered before her face. This unhappy princeſs foretold, in the agonies of deſpair, that her murder would ſoon be avenged by the total ruin of the Engliſh nation.

Never was prophecy better fulfilled; and never did barbarous policy prove more fatal to the authors. Sweyn and his Danes, who wanted but a pretence for invading the Engliſh, appeared off the weſtern coaſt, and threatened to take full revenge for the ſlaughter of their countrymen. Exeter fell firſt into their hands, from the negligence or treachery of earl Hugh, a Norman, who had been made governor by the intereſt of queen Emma. They began to ſpread their devaſtations over the country; when the Engliſh, ſenſible what outrages they muſt now expect from their barbarous and offended enemy, aſſembled more early, and in greater numbers, than uſual, and made an appearance of vigorous reſiſtance. But all theſe preparations were fruſtrated by the treachery of duke Alfric, who was intruſted with the command, and who, feigning ſickneſs, refuſed to lead the army againſt the Danes, till it was diſpirited, and at laſt diſſipated, by his fatal miſconduct. Alfric ſoon after died; and Edric, a greater traitor than he, who had married the king's daughter, and had acquired a total aſcendant over him, ſucceeded Alfric in the government of Mercia, and in the command of the Engliſh armies. A great

famine, proceeding partly from the bad ſeaſons, partly from the decay of agriculture, added to all the other miſeries of the inhabitants. The country waſted by the Danes, haraſſed by the fruitleſs expeditions of its own forces, was reduced to the utmoſt deſolation; and at laſt, in the year 1007, ſubmitted to the infamy of purchaſing a precarious peace from the enemy by the payment of thirty thouſand pounds.

The Engliſh endeavoured to employ this interval in making preparations againſt the return of the Danes, which they had reaſon ſoon to expect. A law was made, ordering the proprietors of eight hides of land to provide each a horſeman and a complete ſuit of armour; and thoſe of three hundred and ten hides to equip a ſhip for the defence of the coaſt. When this navy was aſſembled, which muſt have conſiſted of near eight hundred veſſels,[u] all hopes of its ſucceſs were diſappointed by the factions, animoſities, and diſſenſions, of the nobility. Edric had impelled his brother Brightric to prefer an accuſation of treaſon againſt Wolfnorth, governor of Suſſex, the father of the famous earl Godwin; and that nobleman, well acquainted with the malevolence as well as power of his enemy, found no means of ſafety but in deſerting with twenty ſhips to the Danes. Brightric purſued him with a fleet of eighty ſail; but, his ſhips being ſhattered in a tempeſt, and ſtranded on the coaſt, he was ſuddenly attacked by Wolfnorth, and all his veſſels were burnt and deſtroyed. The imbecility of the king was little capable of repairing this misfortune; the treachery of Edric fruſtrated every plan for future defence; and the Engliſh navy, diſconcerted, diſcouraged, and divided, was at laſt ſcattered into its ſeveral harbours.

It is almoſt impoſſible, or would be tedious, to relate particularly all the miſeries to which the Engliſh were thenceforth expoſed. We hear of nothing but the ſacking and burning of

towns; the devaſtation of the open country; the appearance of the enemy in every quarter of the kingdom; their cruel diligence in diſcovering any corner which had not been ranſacked by their former violence. The broken and disjointed narration of the ancient hiſtorians is here well adapted to the nature of the war; which was conducted by ſuch ſudden inroads as would have been dangerous even to an united and well governed kingdom, but proved fatal where nothing but a general conſternation and mutual diffidence and diſſenſion prevailed. The governors of one province refuſed to march to the aſſiſtance of another; and were at laſt terrified from aſſembling their forces for the defence of their own province. General councils were ſummoned; but either no reſolution was taken, or none was carried into execution. And the only expedient, in which the Engliſh agreed, was the baſe and imprudent one of buying a new peace from the Danes by the payment of forty-eight thouſand pounds.

This meaſure did not even bring them that ſhort interval of repoſe which they had expected from it. The Danes, diſregarding all engagements, continued their devaſtations and hoſtilities; levied a new contribution of eight thouſand pounds upon the county of Kent alone; murdered the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who had refuſed to countenance this exaction: and the Engliſh nobility found no other reſource than that of ſubmitting every where to the Daniſh monarch, ſwearing allegiance to him, and delivering him hoſtages for their fidelity. Ethelred, equally afraid of the violence of the enemy and the treachery of his own ſubjects, fled into Normandy, whither he had ſent before him queen Emma, and her two ſons Alfred and Edward. Richard received his unhappy gueſts with a generoſity that does honour to his memory.

The king had not been above ſix weeks in Normandy when he heard of the death of Sweyn, who expired at Gainſborough.

before he had time to eſtabliſh himſelf in his new acquired dominions. The Engliſh prelates and nobility, taking advantage of this event, ſent over a deputation to Normandy; invited Ethelred to return to them, expreſſing a deſire of being again governed by their native prince; and intimating their hopes that, being now tutored by experience, he would avoid all thoſe errors which had been attended with ſuch misfortunes to himſelf and to his people. But the miſconduct of Ethelred was incurable; and on his reſuming the government he diſcovered the ſame incapacity, indolence, cowardice, and credulity, which had ſo often expoſed him to the inſults of his enemies. His ſon-in-law Edric, notwithſtanding his repeated treaſons, retained ſuch influence at court as to inſtil into the king jealouſies of Sigefert and Morcar, two of the chief nobles of Mercia. Edric allured them into his houſe, where he murdered them; while Ethelred participated in the infamy of the action, by confiſcating their eſtates, and thruſting into a convent the widow of Sigefert. She was a woman of ſingular beauty and merit; and, in a viſit which was paid her during her confinement by prince Edmond, the king's eldeſt ſon, ſhe inſpired him with ſo violent an affection that he releaſed her from the convent, and ſoon after married her, without the conſent of his father.

Meanwhile the Engliſh found in Canute, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Sweyn, an enemy no leſs terrible than the prince from whom death had ſo lately delivered them. He ravaged the eaſtern coaſt with mercileſs fury, and put aſhore all the Engliſh hoſtages at Sandwich, after having cut off their hands and noſes. He was obliged, by the neceſſity of his affairs, to make a voyage to Denmark; but, returning ſoon after, he continued his depredations along the ſouthern coaſt. He even broke into the counties of Dorſet, Wilts, and Somerſet; where an army was aſſembled againſt him, under the command of prince Edmond and duke Edric.

The latter ſtill continued his perfidious machinations; and, after endeavouring in vain to get the prince into his power, he found means to diſperſe the army; and he then openly deſerted to Canute with forty veſſels.

Notwithſtanding this misfortune, Edmond was not diſconcerted; but, aſſembling all the force of England, was in a condition to give battle to the enemy. The king had had ſuch frequent experience of perfidy among his ſubjects, that he had loſt all confidence in them. He remained at London, pretending ſickneſs, but really from apprehenſions that they intended to buy their peace by delivering him into the hands of his enemies. The army called aloud for their ſovereign to march at their head againſt the Danes; and, on his refuſal to take the field, they were ſo diſcouraged that thoſe vaſt preparations became ineffectual for the defence of the kingdom. Edmond, deprived of all regular ſupplies to maintain his ſoldiers, was obliged to commit equal ravages with thoſe which were practiſed by the Danes; and, after making ſome fruitleſs expeditions into the north, which had ſubmitted entirely to Canute's power, he retired to London, determined there to maintain, to the laſt extremity, the ſmall remains of Engliſh liberty. He here found every thing in confuſion by the death of the king, who expired after an unhappy and inglorious reign of thirty-five years. He left two ſons by his firſt marriage; Edmond, who ſucceeded him, and Edwy, whom Canute afterwards murdered. His two ſons by the ſecond marriage, Alfred and Edward, were immediately, upon Ethelred's death, conveyed into Normandy by queen Emma.

EDMOND IRONSIDE.

1016....1017.

THIS prince, who received the name of Ironſide from his hardy valour, poſſeſſed courage and abilities ſufficient to have prevented his country from ſinking into thoſe calamities, but not to raiſe it from that abyſs of miſery into which it had already fallen. Among the other misfortunes of the Engliſh, treachery and diſaffection had creeped in among the nobility and prelates; and Edmond found no better expedient, for ſtopping the farther progreſs of theſe fatal evils, than to lead his army inſtantly into the field, and to employ them againſt the common enemy. After meeting with ſome ſucceſs at Gillingham, he prepared himſelf to decide, in one general engagement, the fate of his crown; and at Scoerſton, in the county of Gloceſter, he offered battle to the enemy, who were commanded by Canute and Edric. Fortune, in the beginning of the day, declared for him; but Edric, having cut off the head of one Oſmer, whoſe countenance reſembled that of Edmond, fixed it on a ſpear, carried it through the ranks in triumph, and called aloud to the Engliſh, that it was time to fly; for, behold! the head of their ſovereign. And, though Edmond, obſerving the conſternation of the troops, took off his helmet and ſhewed himſelf to them, the utmoſt he could gain by his activity and valour was to leave the victory undecided. Edric now took a ſurer method to ruin him, by pretending to deſert to him; and, as Edmond was well acquainted with his power, and probably knew no other of the chief nobility in whom he could repoſe more confidence, he was obliged, notwithſtanding the repeated perfidy of the man, to give him a conſiderable command in the army. A battle ſoon after enſued at

Aſſington in Eſſex; where Edric, flying in the beginning of the day, occaſioned the total defeat of the Engliſh, followed by a great ſlaughter of the nobility. The indefatigable Edmond, however, had ſtill reſources. Aſſembling a new army at Gloceſter, he was again in a condition to diſpute the field; when the Daniſh and Engliſh nobility, equally haraſſed with thoſe convulſions, obliged their kings to come to a compromiſe, and to divide the kingdom between them by treaty. Canute reſerved to himſelf the northern diviſion, conſiſting of Mercia, Eaſt Anglia, and Northumberland, which he had entirely ſubdued; the ſouthern parts were left to Edmond. This prince ſurvived the treaty about a month. He was murdered at Oxford by two of his chamberlains, accomplices of Edric, who thereby made way for the ſucceſſion of Canute the Dane to the crown of England.

CANUTE.

1017....1035.

THE Engliſh, who had been unable to defend their country, and maintain their independency, under ſo active and brave a prince as Edmond, could, after his death, expect nothing but total ſubjection from Canute; who, active and brave himſelf, and at the head of a great force, was ready to take advantage of the minority of Edwin and Edward, the two ſons of Edmond. Yet this conqueror, who was commonly ſo little ſcrupulous, ſhewed himſelf anxious to cover his injuſtice under plauſible pretences. Before he ſeized the dominions of the Engliſh princes he ſummoned a general aſſembly of the ſtates, in order to fix the ſucceſſion of the kingdom. He here ſuborned ſome nobles to depoſe that, in the treaty of Gloceſter, it had been verbally agreed either

to name Canute, in caſe of Edmond's death, ſucceſſor to his dominions, or tutor to his children (for hiſtorians vary in this particular): and that evidence, ſupported by the great power of Canute, determined the ſtates immediately to put the Daniſh monarch in poſſeſſion of the government. Canute, jealous of the two princes, but ſenſible that he ſhould render himſelf extremely odious if he ordered them to be diſpatched in England, ſent them abroad to his ally the king of Sweden; whom he deſired, as ſoon as they arrived at his court, to free him by their death from all farther anxiety. The Swediſh monarch was too generous to comply with the requeſt; but, being afraid of drawing on himſelf a quarrel with Canute by protecting the young princes, he ſent them to Solomon, king of Hungary, to be educated in his court. The elder Edwin was afterwards married to the ſiſter of the king of Hungary; but, the Engliſh prince dying without iſſue, Solomon gave his ſiſter-in-law Agatha, daughter of the emperor Henry II. in marriage to Edward the younger brother; and ſhe bore him Edgar Atheling, Margaret, afterwards queen of Scotland, and Chriſtina, who retired into a convent.

Canute, though he had reached the great point of his ambition in obtaining poſſeſſion of the Engliſh crown, was obliged at firſt to make great ſacrifices to it; and to gratify the chief of the nobility, by beſtowing on them the moſt extenſive governments and juriſdictions. He created Thurkill earl or duke of Eaſt Anglia (for theſe titles were then nearly of the ſame import), Yric of Northumberland, and Edric of Mercia; reſerving only to himſelf the adminiſtration of Weſſex. But, ſeizing afterwards a favourable opportunity, he expelled Thurkill and Yric from their governments, and baniſhed them the kingdom. He put to death many of the Engliſh nobility, on whoſe fidelity he could not rely, and whom he hated on account of their diſloyalty to their native prince. And even the traitor Edric, having had the aſſurance

to reproach him with his ſervices, was condemned to be executed, and his body to be thrown into the Thames; a ſuitable reward for his multiplied acts of perfidy and rebellion.

Canute alſo found himſelf obliged, in the beginning of his reign, to load the people with heavy taxes, in order to reward his Daniſh followers. He exacted from them at one time the ſum of ſeventy-two thouſand pounds; beſides eleven thouſand pounds, which he levied on London alone. He was probably willing, from political motives, to mulct ſeverely that city, on account of the affection which it had borne to Edmond, and the reſiſtance which it had made to the Daniſh power in two obſtinate ſieges.* But theſe rigours were imputed to neceſſity; and Canute, like a wiſe prince, was determined that the Engliſh, now deprived of all their dangerous leaders, ſhould be reconciled to the Daniſh yoke by the juſtice and impartiality of his adminiſtration. He ſent back to Denmark as many of his followers as he could ſafely ſpare; he reſtored the Saxon cuſtoms in a general aſſembly of the ſtates; he made no diſtinction between Danes and Engliſh in the diſtribution of juſtice; and he took care, by a ſtrict execution of law, to protect the lives and properties of all his people. The Danes were gradually incorporated with his new ſubjects; and both were glad to obtain a little reſpite from thoſe multiplied calamities from which the one no leſs than the other had, in their fierce conteſt for power, experienced ſuch fatal conſequences.

The removal of Edmond's children into ſo diſtant a country as Hungary was, next to their death, regarded by Canute as the greateſt ſecurity to his government; he had no farther anxiety, except with regard to Alfred and Edward, who were protected and ſupported by their uncle Richard, duke of Normandy. Richard even fitted out a great armament, in order to reſtore the Engliſh princes to the throne of their anceſtors; and, though the

navy was diſperſed by a ſtorm, Canute ſaw the danger to which he was expoſed from the enmity of ſo warlike a people as the Normans. In order to acquire the friendſhip of the duke, he paid his addreſſes to queen Emma, ſiſter of that prince; and promiſed that he would leave the children, whom he ſhould have by that marriage, in poſſeſſion of the crown of England. Richard complied with his demand, and ſent over Emma to England, where ſhe was ſoon after married to Canute.[y] The Engliſh, though they diſapproved of her eſpouſing the mortal enemy of her former huſband and his family, were pleaſed to find at court a ſovereign to whom they were accuſtomed, and who had already formed connexions with them. And thus Canute, beſides ſecuring by this marriage the alliance of Normandy, gradually acquired, by the ſame means, the confidence of his own ſubjects.[z] The Norman prince did not long ſurvive the marriage of Emma; and he left the inheritance of the duchy to his eldeſt ſon of the ſame name; who, dying a year after him without children, was ſucceeded by his brother Robert, a man of valour and abilities.

Canute, having ſettled his power in England beyond all danger of a revolution, made a voyage to Denmark, in order to reſiſt the attacks of the king of Sweden; and he carried along with him a great body of the Engliſh, under the command of earl Godwin. This nobleman had here an opportunity of performing a ſervice, by which he both reconciled the king's mind to the Engliſh nation, and, gaining to himſelf the friendſhip of his ſovereign, laid the foundation of that immenſe fortune which he acquired to his family. He was ſtationed next the Swediſh camp; and, obſerving a favourable opportunity, which he was obliged ſuddenly to ſeize, he attacked the enemy in the night, drove them from their trenches, threw them into diſorder, purſued his advantage, and obtained a deciſive victory over them.

Next morning Canute, ſeeing the Engliſh camp entirely abandoned, imagined that thoſe diſaffected troops had deſerted to the enemy; he was agreeably ſurpriſed to find that they were at that time engaged in purſuit of the diſcomfited Swedes. He was ſo pleaſed with his ſucceſs, and with the manner of obtaining it, that he beſtowed his daughter in marriage upon Godwin, and treated him ever after with entire confidence and regard.

In another voyage, which he made afterwards to Denmark, Canute attacked Norway; and, expelling the juſt but unwarlike Olaus, kept poſſeſſion of his kingdom till the death of that prince. He had now, by his conqueſts and valour, attained the utmoſt height of grandeur. Having leiſure from wars and intrigues, he felt the unſatisfactory nature of all human enjoyments; and, equally weary of the glories and turmoils of this life, he began to caſt his view towards that future exiſtence, which it is ſo natural for the human mind, whether ſatiated by proſperity or diſguſted with adverſity, to make the object of its attention. Unfortunately, the ſpirit which prevailed in that age gave a wrong direction to his devotion; inſtead of making compenſation to thoſe whom he had injured by his former acts of violence, he employed himſelf entirely in thoſe exerciſes of piety which the monks repreſented as the moſt meritorious. He built churches; he endowed monaſteries; he enriched the eccleſiaſtics; and he beſtowed revenues for the ſupport of chantries at Aſſington and other places, where he appointed prayers to be ſaid for the ſouls of thoſe who had there fallen in battle againſt him. He even undertook a pilgrimage to Rome, where he reſided a conſiderable time. Beſides obtaining from the pope ſome privileges for the Engliſh ſchool erected there, he engaged all the princes, through whoſe dominions he was obliged to paſs, to deſiſt from thoſe heavy impoſitions and tolls which they were accuſtomed to exact from the Engliſh pilgrims. By this ſpirit of devotion, no leſs

CANUTE REPROVING HIS COURTIERS.

than by his equitable and politic adminiſtration, he gained, in a good meaſure, the affections of his ſubjects.

Canute, the greateſt and moſt powerful monarch of his time, ſovereign of Denmark and Norway as well as of England, could not fail of meeting with adulation from his courtiers; a tribute which is liberally paid even to the meaneſt and weakeſt princes. Some of his flatterers, breaking out one day in admiration of his grandeur, exclaimed that every thing was poſſible for him: upon which the monarch, it is ſaid, ordered his chair to be ſet on the ſea ſhore while the tide was riſing; and, as the waters approached, he commanded them to retire, and to obey the voice of him who was lord of the ocean. He feigned to ſit ſome time in expectation of their ſubmiſſion; but, when the ſea ſtill advanced towards him, and began to waſh him with its billows, he turned to his courtiers, and remarked to them that every creature in the univerſe was feeble and impotent, and that power reſided with one Being alone, in whoſe hands were all the elements of nature; who could ſay to the ocean, 'Thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther;' and who could level with his nod the moſt towering piles of human pride and ambition.

The only memorable action which Canute performed after his return from Rome was an expedition againſt Malcolm, king of Scotland. During the reign of Ethelred a tax of a ſhilling a hide had been impoſed on all the lands of England. It was commonly called Danegelt; becauſe the revenue had been employed either in buying peace with the Danes, or in making preparations againſt the inroads of that hoſtile nation. That monarch had required that the ſame tax ſhould be paid by Cumberland which was held by the Scots; but Malcolm, a warlike prince, told him that, as he was always able to repulſe the Danes by his own power, he would neither ſubmit to buy peace of his enemies, nor pay others for reſiſting them. Ethelred, offended at

this reply, which contained a ſecret reproach on his own conduct, undertook an expedition againſt Cumberland; but, though he committed ravages upon the country, he could never bring Malcolm to a temper more humble or ſubmiſſive. Canute, after his acceſſion, ſummoned the Scottiſh king to acknowledge himſelf a vaſſal for Cumberland to the crown of England; but Malcolm refuſed compliance, on pretence that he owed homage to thoſe princes only who inherited that kingdom by right of blood. Canute was not of a temper to bear this inſult; and the king of Scotland ſoon found that the ſceptre was in very different hands from thoſe of the feeble and irreſolute Ethelred. Upon Canute's appearing on the frontiers with a formidable army, Malcolm agreed that his grandſon and heir Duncan, whom he put in poſſeſſion of Cumberland, ſhould make the ſubmiſſions required, and that the heirs of Scotland ſhould always acknowledge themſelves vaſſals to England for that province.[a]

Canute paſſed four years in peace after this enterpriſe, and he died at Shaftſbury;[b] leaving three ſons, Sweyn, Harold, and Hardicanute. Sweyn, whom he had by his firſt marriage with Alfwen, daughter of the earl of Hampſhire, was crowned in Norway; Hardicanute, whom Emma had born him, was in poſſeſſion of Denmark; Harold, who was of the ſame marriage with Sweyn, was at that time in England.

HAROLD HAREFOOT.

1035....1039.

THOUGH Canute, in his treaty with Richard, duke of Normandy, had ſtipulated that his children by Emma ſhould ſucceed to the crown of England, he had either conſidered himſelf as releaſed

from that engagement by the death of Richard, or eſteemed it dangerous to leave an unſettled and newly conquered kingdom in the hands of ſo young a prince as Hardicanute; he therefore appointed, by his will, Harold ſucceſſor to the crown. This prince was beſides preſent to maintain his claim; he was favoured by all the Danes; and he got immediately poſſeſſion of his father's treaſures, which might be equally uſeful, whether he found it neceſſary to proceed by force or intrigue in enſuring his ſucceſſion. On the other hand, Hardicanute had the ſuffrages of the Engliſh, who, on account of his being born among them of queen Emma, regarded him as their countryman; he was favoured by the articles of treaty with the duke of Normandy; and, above all, his party was eſpouſed by earl Godwin, the moſt powerful nobleman in the kingdom, eſpecially in the province of Weſſex, the chief ſeat of the ancient Engliſh. Affairs were likely to terminate in a civil war; when, by the interpoſition of the nobility of both parties, a compromiſe was made: and it was agreed that Harold ſhould enjoy, together with London, all the provinces north of the Thames, while the poſſeſſion of the ſouth ſhould remain to Hardicanute; and, till that prince ſhould appear and take poſſeſſion of his dominions, Emma fixed her reſidence at Wincheſter, and eſtabliſhed her authority over her ſon's ſhare of the partition.

Meanwhile Robert, duke of Normandy, died in a pilgrimage to the holy land, and, being ſucceeded by a ſon yet a minor, the two Engliſh princes, Alfred and Edward, who found no longer any countenance or protection in that country, gladly embraced the opportunity of paying a viſit, with a numerous retinue, to their mother Emma; who ſeemed to be placed in a ſtate of ſo much power and ſplendour at Wincheſter. But the face of affairs ſoon wore a melancholy aſpect. Earl Godwin had been gained by the arts of Harold, who promiſed to eſpouſe the

daughter of that nobleman; and, while the treaty was yet a ſecret, theſe two tyrants laid a plan for the deſtruction of the Engliſh princes. Alfred was invited to London by Harold with many profeſſions of friendſhip; but, when he had reached Guilford, he was ſet upon by Godwin's vaſſals; about ſix hundred of his train were murdered in the moſt cruel manner; he himſelf was taken priſoner, his eyes were put out, and he was conducted to the monaſtery of Ely, where he died ſoon after.[c] Edward and Emma, appriſed of the fate which was awaiting them, fled beyond ſea; the former into Normandy, the latter into Flanders: while Harold, triumphing in his bloody policy, took poſſeſſion, without reſiſtance, of all the dominions aſſigned to his brother.

This is the only memorable action performed, during a reign of four years, by this prince, who gave ſo bad a ſpecimen of his character, and whoſe bodily accompliſhments alone are known to us by his appellation of Harefoot, which he acquired from his agility in running and walking. He died on the fourteenth of April 1039, little regretted or eſteemed by his ſubjects, and left the ſucceſſion open to his brother Hardicanute.

HARDICANUTE.

1039....1041.

HARDICANUTE, or Canute the Hardy, that is, the robuſt (for he too is chiefly known by his bodily accompliſhments), though, by remaining ſo long in Denmark, he had been deprived of his ſhare in the partition of the kingdom, had not abandoned his pretenſions; and he had determined, before Harold's death, to recover by arms what he had loſt either by his own negligence, or by the neceſſity of his affairs. On pretence of paying a viſit to the

queen dowager in Flanders, he had aſſembled a fleet of ſixty ſail, and was preparing to make a deſcent on England, when intelligence of his brother's death induced him to ſail immediately to London, where he was received in triumph, and acknowledged king without oppoſition.

The firſt act of Hardicanute's government afforded his ſubjects a bad prognoſtic of his future conduct. He was ſo enraged at Harold for depriving him of his ſhare of the kingdom, and for the cruel treatment of his brother Alfred, that, in an impotent deſire of revenge againſt the dead, he ordered his body to be dug up, and to be thrown into the Thames; and, when it was found by ſome fiſhermen, and buried in London, he ordered it again to be dug up, and to be thrown again into the river: but it was fiſhed up a ſecond time, and then interred with great ſecreſy. Godwin, equally ſervile and inſolent, ſubmitted to be his inſtrument in that unnatural and brutal action.

That nobleman knew that he was univerſally believed to have been an accomplice in the barbarity exerciſed on Alfred, and that he was on that account obnoxious to Hardicanute; and perhaps he hoped, by diſplaying this rage againſt Harold's memory, to juſtify himſelf from having had any participation in his counſels. But prince Edward, being invited over by the king, immediately on his appearance preferred an accuſation againſt Godwin for the murder of Alfred, and demanded juſtice for that crime. Godwin, in order to appeaſe the king, made him a magnificent preſent of a galley with a gilt ſtern, rowed by fourſcore men, who wore each of them a gold bracelet on his arm weighing ſixteen ounces, and were armed and clothed in the moſt ſumptuous manner. Hardicanute, pleaſed with the ſplendour of this ſpectacle, quickly forgot his brother's murder; and, on Godwin's ſwearing that he was innocent of the crime, he allowed him to be acquitted.

Though Hardicanute, before his acceſſion, had been called over by the vows of the Engliſh, he ſoon loſt the affections of the nation by his miſconduct; but nothing appeared more grievous to them than his renewing the impoſition of Danegelt, and obliging the nation to pay a great ſum of money to the fleet which brought him from Denmark. The diſcontents ran high in many places. In Worceſter the populace roſe, and put to death two of the collectors. The king, enraged at this oppoſition, ſwore vengeance againſt the city; and ordered three noblemen (Godwin, duke of Weſſex, Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia) to execute his menaces with the utmoſt rigour. They were obliged to ſet fire to the city, and deliver it up to be plundered by their ſoldiers; but they ſaved the lives of the inhabitants, whom they confined in a ſmall iſland of the Severn, called Bevery, till, by their interceſſion, they were able to appeaſe the king, and obtain the pardon of the ſupplicants.

This violent government was of ſhort duration. Hardicanute died in two years after his acceſſion, at the nuptials of a Daniſh lord, which he had honoured with his preſence. His uſual habits of intemperance were ſo well known, that, notwithſtanding his robuſt conſtitution, his ſudden death gave as little ſurpriſe as it did ſorrow to his ſubjects.

EDWARD THE CONFESSOR.

1041....1066.

THE Engliſh, on the death of Hardicanute, ſaw a favourable opportunity for recovering their liberty, and for ſhaking off the Daniſh yoke, under which they had ſo long laboured. Sweyn,

king of Norway, the eldeſt ſon of Canute, was abſent; and, as the two laſt kings had died without iſſue, none of that race preſented himſelf, nor any whom the Danes could ſupport as ſucceſſor to the throne. Prince Edward was fortunately at court on his brother's demiſe; and, though the deſcendants of Edmond Ironſide were the true heirs of the Saxon family, yet their abſence in ſo remote a country as Hungary appeared a ſufficient reaſon for their excluſion to a people like the Engliſh, ſo little accuſtomed to obſerve a regular order in the ſucceſſion of their monarchs. All delays might be dangerous; and the preſent occaſion muſt haſtily be embraced; while the Danes, without concert, without a leader, aſtoniſhed at the preſent incident, and anxious only for their perſonal ſafety, durſt not oppoſe the united voice of the nation.

But this concurrence of circumſtances in favour of Edward might have failed of its effect, had his ſucceſſion been oppoſed by Godwin; whoſe power, alliances, and abilities, gave him a great influence at all times, eſpecially amidſt thoſe ſudden opportunities which always attended a revolution of government, and which, either ſeized or neglected, commonly prove deciſive. There were oppoſite reaſons which divided men's hopes and fears with regard to Godwin's conduct. On the one hand, the credit of that nobleman lay chiefly in Weſſex, which was almoſt entirely inhabited by Engliſh: it was therefore preſumed that he would ſecond the wiſhes of that people in reſtoring the Saxon line, and in humbling the Danes; from whom he, as well as they, had reaſon to dread, as they had already felt, the moſt grievous oppreſſions. On the other hand, there ſubſiſted a declared animoſity between Edward and Godwin, on account of Alfred's murder, of which the latter had publicly been accuſed by the prince, and which he might believe ſo deep an offence as could never, on account of any ſubſequent merits, be ſincerely

pardoned. But their common friends here interpoſed; and, repreſenting the neceſſity of their good correſpondence, obliged them to lay aſide all jealouſy and rancour, and concur in reſtoring liberty to their native country. Godwin only ſtipulated that Edward, as a pledge of his ſincere reconciliation, ſhould promiſe to marry his daughter Editha; and, having fortified himſelf by this alliance, he ſummoned a general council at Gillingham, and prepared every meaſure for ſecuring the ſucceſſion to Edward. The Engliſh were unanimous and zealous in their reſolutions; the Danes were divided and diſpirited; any ſmall oppoſition which appeared in this aſſembly was browbeaten and ſuppreſſed; and Edward was crowned king with every demonſtration of duty and affection.

The triumph of the Engliſh, upon this ſignal and deciſive advantage, was at firſt attended with ſome inſult and violence againſt the Danes; but the king, by the mildneſs of his character, ſoon reconciled the latter to his adminiſtration, and the diſtinction between the two nations gradually diſappeared. The Danes were interſperſed with the Engliſh in moſt of the provinces; they ſpoke nearly the ſame language; they differed little in their manners and laws; domeſtic diſſenſions in Denmark prevented, for ſome years, any powerful invaſion from thence, which might awaken paſt animoſities; and, as the Norman conqueſt, which enſued ſoon after, reduced both nations to equal ſubjection, there is no farther mention in hiſtory of any difference between them. The joy, however, of their preſent deliverance made ſuch impreſſion on the minds of the Engliſh, that they inſtituted an annual feſtival for celebrating that great event; and it was obſerved in ſome countries even to the time of Spellman.[d]

The popularity which Edward enjoyed on his acceſſion was not deſtroyed by the firſt act of his adminiſtration, his reſuming

all the grants of his immediate predeceſſors; an attempt which is commonly attended with the moſt dangerous conſequences. The poverty of the crown convinced the nation that this act of violence was become abſolutely neceſſary; and, as the loſs fell chiefly on the Danes, who had obtained large grants from the late kings, their countrymen, on account of their ſervices in ſubduing the kingdom, the Engliſh were rather pleaſed to ſee them reduced to their primitive poverty. The king's ſeverity alſo towards his mother, the queen dowager, though expoſed to ſome more cenſure, met not with very general diſapprobation. He had hitherto lived on indifferent terms with that princeſs; he accuſed her of neglecting him and his brother during their adverſe fortune;[e] he remarked that, as the ſuperior qualities of Canute, and his better treatment of her, had made her entirely indifferent to the memory of Ethelred, ſhe alſo gave the preference to her children of the ſecond bed, and always regarded Hardicanute as her favourite. The ſame reaſons had probably made her unpopular in England; and, though her benefactions to the monks obtained her the favour of that order, the nation was not, in general, diſpleaſed to ſee her ſtripped by Edward of immenſe treaſures which ſhe had amaſſed. He confined her, during the remainder of her life, in a monaſtery at Wincheſter; but carried his rigour againſt her no farther. The ſtories of his accuſing her of a participation in her ſon Alfred's murder, and of a criminal correſpondence with the biſhop of Wincheſter, and alſo of her juſtifying herſelf by treading barefoot, without receiving any hurt, over nine burning ploughſhares, were the inventions of the monkiſh hiſtorians, and were propagated and believed from the ſilly wonder of poſterity.[f]

The Engliſh flattered themſelves that by the acceſſion of Edward they were delivered for ever from the dominion of foreigners; but they ſoon found that this evil was not yet entirely

removed. The king had been educated in Normandy; and had contracted many intimacies with the natives of that country, as well as an affection for their manners.[g] The court of England was ſoon filled with Normans, who, being diſtinguiſhed both by the favour of Edward, and by a degree of cultivation ſuperior to that which was attained by the Engliſh in thoſe ages, ſoon rendered their language, cuſtoms, and laws, faſhionable in the kingdom. The ſtudy of the French tongue became general among the people; the courtiers affected to imitate that nation in their dreſs, equipage, and entertainments; even the lawyers employed a foreign language in their deeds and papers;[h] but, above all, the church felt the influence and dominion of thoſe ſtrangers. Ulf and William, two Normans, who had formerly been the king's chaplains, were created biſhops of Dorcheſter and London. Robert, a Norman alſo, was promoted to the ſee of Canterbury,[i] and always enjoyed the higheſt favour of his maſter, of which his abilities rendered him not unworthy. And, though the king's prudence, or his want of authority, made him confer almoſt all the civil and military employments on the natives, the eccleſiaſtical preferments fell often to the ſhare of the Normans; and, as the latter poſſeſſed Edward's confidence, they had ſecretly a great influence on public affairs, and excited the jealouſy of the Engliſh, particularly of earl Godwin.[k]

This powerful nobleman, beſides being duke or earl of Weſſex, had the counties of Kent and Suſſex annexed to his government. His eldeſt ſon Sweyn poſſeſſed the ſame authority in the counties of Oxford, Berks, Gloceſter, and Hereford; and Harold, his ſecond ſon, was duke of Eaſt Anglia, and at the ſame time governor of Eſſex. The great authority of this family was ſupported by immenſe poſſeſſions and powerful alliances; and the abilities, as well as ambition, of Godwin himſelf contributed to render it ſtill more dangerous. A prince of greater capacity and vigour than

Edward would have found it difficult to ſupport the dignity of the crown under ſuch circumſtances; and, as the haughty temper of Godwin made him often forget the reſpect due to his prince, Edward's animoſity againſt him was grounded on perſonal as well as political conſiderations, on recent as well as more ancient injuries. The king, in purſuance of his engagements, had indeed married Editha, the daughter of Godwin;[1] but this alliance became a freſh ſource of enmity between them. Edward's hatred of the father was transferred to that princeſs; and Editha, though poſſeſſed of many amiable accompliſhments, could never acquire the confidence and affection of her huſband. It is even pretended that, during the whole courſe of her life, he abſtained from all commerce of love with her; and ſuch was the abſurd admiration paid to an inviolable chaſtity during thoſe ages, that his conduct in this particular is highly celebrated by the monkiſh hiſtorians, and greatly contributed to his acquiring the title of ſaint and confeſſor.[m]

The moſt popular pretence, on which Godwin could ground his diſaffection to the king and his adminiſtration, was to complain of the influence of the Normans in the government; and a declared oppoſition had thence ariſen between him and theſe favourites. It was not long before this animoſity broke into action. Euſtace, count of Bologne, having paid a viſit to the king, paſſed by Dover in his return. One of his train, being refuſed entrance to a lodging which had been aſſigned him, attempted to make his way by force, and in the conteſt he wounded the maſter of the houſe. The inhabitants revenged this inſult by the death of the ſtranger; the count and his train took arms, and murdered the wounded townſman; a tumult enſued; near twenty perſons were killed on each ſide; and Euſtace, being overpowered by numbers, was obliged to ſave his life by flight from the fury of the populace. He hurried immediately to court,

and complained of the uſage he had met with. The king entered zealouſly into the quarrel, and was highly diſpleaſed that a ſtranger of ſuch diſtinction, whom he had invited over to his court, ſhould, without any juſt cauſe, as he believed, have felt ſo ſenſibly the inſolence and animoſity of his people. He gave orders to Godwin, in whoſe government Dover lay, to repair immediately to the place, and to puniſh the inhabitants for the crime: but Godwin, who deſired rather to encourage than repreſs the popular diſcontents againſt foreigners, refuſed obedience, and endeavoured to throw the whole blame of the riot on the count of Bologne and his retinue.[n] Edward, touched in ſo ſenſible a point, ſaw the neceſſity of exerting the royal authority; and he threatened Godwin, if he perſiſted in his diſobedience, to make him feel the utmoſt effects of his reſentment.

The earl, perceiving a rupture to be unavoidable, and pleaſed to embark in a cauſe where it was likely he ſhould be ſupported by his countrymen, made preparations for his own defence, or rather for an attack on Edward. Under pretence of repreſſing ſome diſorders on the Welſh frontier, he ſecretly aſſembled a great army; and was approaching the king, who reſided, without any military force and without ſuſpicion, at Gloceſter.[o] Edward applied for protection to Siward, duke of Northumberland, and Leofric, duke of Mercia, two powerful noblemen; whoſe jealouſy of Godwin's greatneſs, as well as their duty to the crown, engaged them to defend the king in this extremity. They haſtened to him with ſuch of their followers as they could aſſemble on a ſudden; and, finding the danger much greater than they had at firſt apprehended, they iſſued orders for muſtering all the forces within their reſpective governments, and for marching them without delay to the defence of the king's perſon and authority. Edward meanwhile endeavoured to gain time by negociation: while Godwin, who thought the king entirely in his power, and

who was willing to ſave appearances, fell into the ſnare; and, not ſenſible that he ought to have no farther reſerve after he had proceeded ſo far, he loſt the favourable opportunity of rendering himſelf maſter of the government.

The Engliſh, though they had no high idea of Edward's vigour and capacity, bore him great affection on account of his humanity, juſtice, and piety, as well as the long race of their native kings from whom he was deſcended; and they haſtened from all quarters to defend him from the preſent danger. His army was now ſo conſiderable that he ventured to take the field; and, marching to London, he ſummoned a great council to judge of the rebellion of Godwin and his ſons. Theſe noblemen pretended at firſt that they were willing to ſtand their trial; but, having in vain endeavoured to make their adherents perſiſt in rebellion, they offered to come to London, provided they might receive hoſtages for their ſafety. This propoſal being rejected, they were obliged to diſband the remains of their forces, and have recourſe to flight. Baldwin, earl of Flanders, gave protection to Godwin and his three ſons, Gurth, Sweyn, and Toſti; the latter of whom had married the daughter of that prince; Harold and Leofwin, two other of his ſons, took ſhelter in Ireland. The eſtates of the father and ſons were confiſcated; their governments were given to others; queen Editha was confined in a monaſtery at Warewel; and the greatneſs of this family, once ſo formidable, ſeemed now to be totally ſupplanted and overthrown.

But Godwin had fixed his authority on too firm a baſis, and he was too ſtrongly ſupported by alliances both foreign and domeſtic, not to occaſion farther diſturbances, and make new efforts for his re-eſtabliſhment. The earl of Flanders permitted him to purchaſe and hire ſhips within his harbours; and Godwin, having manned them with his followers and with freebooters of all

nations, put to ſea, and attempted to make a deſcent at Sandwich. The king, informed of his preparations, had equipped a conſiderable fleet, much ſuperior to that of the enemy; and the earl haſtily, before their appearance, made his retreat into the Flemiſh harbours.[p] The Engliſh court, allured by the preſent ſecurity, and deſtitute of all vigorous counſels, allowed the ſeamen to diſband, and the fleet to go to decay;[q] while Godwin, expecting this event, kept his men in readineſs for action. He put to ſea immediately, and ſailed to the Iſle of Wight; where he was joined by Harold, with a ſquadron which that nobleman had collected in Ireland. He was now maſter of the ſea; and, entering every harbour in the ſouthern coaſt, he ſeized all the ſhips,[r] and ſummoned his followers in thoſe counties, which had ſo long been ſubject to his government, to aſſiſt him in procuring juſtice to himſelf, his family, and his country, againſt the tyranny of foreigners. Re-enforced by great numbers from all quarters, he entered the Thames; and, appearing before London, threw every thing into confuſion. The king alone ſeemed reſolute to defend himſelf to the laſt extremity; but the interpoſition of the Engliſh nobility, many of whom favoured Godwin's pretenſions, made Edward hearken to terms of accommodation: and the feigned humility of the earl, who diſclaimed all intentions of offering violence to his ſovereign, and deſired only to juſtify himſelf by a fair and open trial, paved the way for his more eaſy admiſſion. It was ſtipulated that he ſhould give hoſtages for his good behaviour, and that the primate and all the foreigners ſhould be baniſhed. By this treaty the preſent danger of a civil war was obviated; but the authority of the crown was conſiderably impaired, or rather entirely annihilated. Edward, ſenſible that he had not power ſufficient to ſecure Godwin's hoſtages in England, ſent them over to his kinſman, the young duke of Normandy.

Godwin's death, which happened ſoon after, while he was ſitting at table with the king, prevented him from farther eſtabliſhing the authority which he had acquired, and from reducing Edward to ſtill greater ſubjection.[s] He was ſucceeded in the government of Weſſex, Suſſex, Kent, and Eſſex, and in the office of ſteward of the houſehold, a place of great power, by his ſon Harold; who was actuated by an ambition equal to that of his father, and was ſuperior to him in addreſs, in inſinuation, and in virtue. By a modeſt and gentle demeanour he acquired the good-will of Edward, at leaſt ſoftened that hatred which the prince had ſo long borne his family;[t] and, gaining every day new partiſans by his bounty and affability, he proceeded in a more ſilent, and therefore a more dangerous, manner to the increaſe of his authority. The king, who had not ſufficient vigour directly to oppoſe his progreſs, knew of no other expedient than that hazardous one of raiſing him a rival in the family of Leofric, duke of Mercia, whoſe ſon Algar was inveſted with the government of Eaſt Anglia, which, before the baniſhment of Harold, had belonged to the latter nobleman. But this policy, of balancing oppoſite parties, required a more ſteady hand to manage it than that of Edward; and naturally produced faction, and even civil broils, among nobles of ſuch mighty and independent authority. Algar was ſoon after expelled his government by the intrigues and power of Harold; but, being protected by Griffith, prince of Wales, who had married his daughter, as well as by the power of his father Leofric, he obliged Harold to ſubmit to an accommodation, and was reinſtated in the government of Eaſt Anglia. This peace was not of long duration. Harold, taking advantage of Leofric's death, which happened ſoon after, expelled Algar anew, and baniſhed him the kingdom: and, though that nobleman made a freſh irruption into Eaſt Anglia with an army of Norwegians, and overran the country, his death ſoon

freed Harold from the pretenſions of ſo dangerous a rival. Edward, the eldeſt ſon of Algar, was indeed advanced to the government of Mercia; but the balance, which the king deſired to eſtabliſh between thoſe potent families, was wholly loſt, and the influence of Harold greatly preponderated.

The death of Siward, duke of Northumberland, made the way ſtill more open to the ambition of that nobleman. Siward, beſides his other merits, had acquired honour to England by his ſucceſsful conduct in the only foreign enterpriſe undertaken during the reign of Edward. Duncan, king of Scotland, was a prince of a gentle diſpoſition; but poſſeſſed not the genius requiſite for governing a country ſo turbulent, and ſo much infeſted by the intrigues and animoſities of the great. Macbeth, a powerful nobleman, and nearly allied to the crown, not content with curbing the king's authority, carried ſtill farther his peſtilent ambition: he put his ſovereign to death; chaſed Malcolm Kenmore, his ſon and heir, into England; and uſurped the crown. Siward, whoſe daughter was married to Duncan, embraced, by Edward's orders, the protection of this diſtreſſed family. He marched an army into Scotland; and, having defeated and killed Macbeth in battle, he reſtored Malcolm to the throne of his anceſtors.[u] This ſervice, added to his former connexions with the royal family of Scotland, brought a great acceſſion to the authority of Siward in the north; but, as he had loſt his eldeſt ſon Oſberne in the action with Macbeth, it proved in the iſſue fatal to his family. His ſecond ſon Walthoef appeared, on his father's death, too young to be intruſted with the government of Northumberland; and Harold's influence obtained that dukedom for his own brother Toſti.

There are two circumſtances related of Siward, which diſcover his high ſenſe of honour and his martial diſpoſition. When intelligence was brought him of his ſon Oſberne's death he was

inconſolable, till he heard that the wound was received in the breaſt, and that he had behaved with great gallantry in the action. When he found his own death approaching he ordered his ſervants to clothe him in a complete ſuit of armour; and, ſitting erect on the couch with a ſpear in his hand, declared that in that poſture, the only one worthy of a warrior, he would patiently await the fatal moment.

The king, now worn out with cares and infirmities, felt himſelf far advanced in the decline of life; and, having no iſſue himſelf, began to think of appointing a ſucceſſor to the kingdom. He ſent a deputation to Hungary, to invite over his nephew Edward, ſon of his elder brother, and the only remaining heir of the Saxon line. That prince, whoſe ſucceſſion to the crown would have been eaſy and undiſputed, came to England with his children, Edgar, ſurnamed Atheling, Margaret, and Chriſtina; but his death, which happened a few days after his arrival, threw the king into new difficulties. He ſaw that the great power and ambition of Harold had tempted him to think of obtaining poſſeſſion of the throne on the firſt vacancy, and that Edgar, on account of his youth and inexperience, was very unfit to oppoſe the pretenſions of ſo popular and enterpriſing a rival. The animoſity which he had long borne to earl Godwin made him averſe to the ſucceſſion of his ſon; and he could not, without extreme reluctance, think of an increaſe of grandeur to a family which had riſen on the ruins of royal authority, and which, by the murder of Alfred his brother, had contributed ſo much to the weakening of the Saxon line. In this uncertainty he ſecretly caſt his eye towards his kinſman William, duke of Normandy, as the only perſon whoſe power, and reputation, and capacity, could ſupport any deſtination which he might make in his favour, to the excluſion of Harold and his family.[x]

This famous prince was natural ſon of Robert, duke of Normandy, by Harlotta, daughter of a tanner in Falaiſe;[y] and was very early eſtabliſhed in that grandeur from which his birth ſeemed to have ſet him at ſo great a diſtance. While he was but nine years of age his father had reſolved to undertake a pilgrimage to Jeruſalem; a faſhionable act of devotion, which had taken place of the pilgrimages to Rome, and which, as it was attended with more difficulty and danger, and carried thoſe religious adventurers to the firſt ſources of Chriſtianity, appeared to them more meritorious. Before his departure he aſſembled the ſtates of the duchy; and, informing them of his deſign, he engaged them to ſwear allegiance to his natural ſon William, whom, as he had no legitimate iſſue, he intended, in caſe he ſhould die in the pilgrimage, to leave ſucceſſor to his dominions.[z] As he was a prudent prince, he could not but foreſee the great inconveniencies which muſt attend this journey, and this ſettlement of his ſucceſſion; ariſing from the perpetual turbulency of the great, the claims of other branches of the ducal family, and the power of the French monarch. But all theſe conſiderations were ſurmounted by the prevailing zeal for pilgrimages;[a] and probably the more important they were, the more would Robert exult in ſacrificing them to what he imagined to be his religious duty.

This prince, as he had apprehended, died in his pilgrimage; and the minority of his ſon was attended with all thoſe diſorders which were almoſt unavoidable in that ſituation. The licentious nobles, freed from the awe of ſovereign authority, broke out into perſonal animoſities againſt each other, and made the whole country a ſcene of war and devaſtation.[b] Roger, count of Toni, and Alain, count of Brittany, advanced claims to the dominion of the ſtate; and Henry I. king of France, thought the opportunity favourable for reducing the power of a vaſſal, who had originally acquired his ſettlement in ſo violent and invidious a

manner, and who had long appeared formidable to his ſovereign.[c] The regency eſtabliſhed by Robert encountered great difficulties in ſupporting the government under this complication of dangers; and the young prince, when he came to maturity, found himſelf reduced to a very low condition: but the great qualities, which he ſoon diſplayed in the field and in the cabinet, gave encouragement to his friends, and ſtruck a terror into his enemies. He oppoſed himſelf on all ſides againſt his rebellious ſubjects, and againſt foreign invaders; and by his valour and conduct prevailed in every action. He obliged the French king to grant him peace on reaſonable terms; he expelled all pretenders to the ſovereignty; and he reduced his turbulent barons to pay ſubmiſſion to his authority, and to ſuſpend their mutual animoſities. The natural ſeverity of his temper appeared in a rigorous adminiſtration of juſtice; and, having found the happy effects of this plan of government, without which the laws in thoſe ages became totally impotent, he regarded it as a fixed maxim that an inflexible conduct was the firſt duty of a ſovereign.

The tranquillity which he had eſtabliſhed in his dominions had given William leiſure to pay a viſit to the king of England, during the time of Godwin's baniſhment; and he was received in a manner ſuitable to the great reputation which he had acquired, to the relation by which he was connected with Edward, and to the obligations which that prince owed to his family.[d] On the return of Godwin, and the expulſion of the Norman favourites, Robert, archbiſhop of Canterbury, had, before his departure, perſuaded Edward to think of adopting William as his ſucceſſor; a counſel which was favoured by the king's averſion to Godwin, his prepoſſeſſions for the Normans, and his eſteem of the duke. That prelate, therefore, received a commiſſion to inform William of the king's intentions in his favour;

and he was the firſt perſon that opened the mind of the prince to entertain thoſe ambitious hopes.[e] But Edward, irreſolute and feeble in his purpoſe, finding that the Engliſh would more eaſily acquieſce in the reſtoration of the Saxon line, had, in the mean time, invited his brother's deſcendants from Hungary, with a view of having them recogniſed heirs to the crown. The death of his nephew, and the inexperience and unpromiſing qualities of young Edgar, made him reſume his former intentions in favour of the duke of Normandy; though his averſion to hazardous enterpriſes engaged him to poſtpone the execution, and even to keep his purpoſe ſecret from all his miniſters.

Harold meanwhile proceeded, after a more open manner, in increaſing his popularity, in eſtabliſhing his power, and in preparing the way for his advancement on the firſt vacancy; an event which, from the age and infirmities of the king, appeared not very diſtant. But there was ſtill an obſtacle, which it was requiſite for him previouſly to overcome. Earl Godwin, when reſtored to his power and fortune, had given hoſtages for his good behaviour; and among the reſt one ſon and one grandſon, whom Edward, for greater ſecurity, as has been related, had conſigned to the cuſtody of the duke of Normandy. Harold, though not aware of the duke's being his competitor, was uneaſy that ſuch near relations ſhould be detained priſoners in a foreign country; and he was afraid leſt William ſhould, in favour of Edgar, retain theſe pledges as a check on the ambition of any other pretender. He repreſented, therefore, to the king his unfeigned ſubmiſſion to royal authority, his ſteady duty to his prince, and the little neceſſity there was, after ſuch a uniform trial of his obedience, to detain any longer thoſe hoſtages who had been required on the firſt compoſing of civil diſcords. By theſe topics, enforced by his great power, he extorted the king's conſent to releaſe them; and, in order to effect his purpoſe, he

immediately proceeded, with a numerous retinue, on his journey to Normandy. A tempeſt drove him on the territory of Guy, count of Ponthieu; who, being informed of his quality, immediately detained him priſoner, and demanded an exorbitant ſum for his ranſom. Harold found means to convey intelligence of his ſituation to the duke of Normandy; and repreſented that, while he was proceeding to his court, in execution of a commiſſion from the king of England, he had met with this harſh treatment from the mercenary diſpoſition of the count of Ponthieu.

William was immediately ſenſible of the importance of the incident. He foreſaw that, if he could once gain Harold, either by favours or menaces, his way to the throne of England would be open, and Edward would meet with no farther obſtacle in executing the favourable intentions which he had entertained in his behalf. He ſent, therefore, a meſſenger to Guy, in order to demand the liberty of his priſoner; and that nobleman, not daring to refuſe ſo great a prince, put Harold into the hands of the Norman, who conducted him to Rouen. William received him with every demonſtration of reſpect and friendſhip; and, after ſhewing himſelf diſpoſed to comply with his deſire in delivering up the hoſtages, he took an opportunity of diſcloſing to him the great ſecret of his pretenſions to the crown of England, and of the will which Edward intended to make in his favour. He deſired the aſſiſtance of Harold in perfecting that deſign; he made profeſſions of the utmoſt gratitude in return for ſo great an obligation; he promiſed that the preſent grandeur of Harold's family, which ſupported itſelf with difficulty under the jealouſy and hatred of Edward, ſhould receive new increaſe from a ſucceſſor who would be ſo greatly beholden to him for his advancement. Harold was ſurpriſed at this declaration of the duke; but, being ſenſible that he ſhould never recover his own liberty, much

leſs that of his brother and nephew, if he refuſed the demand, he feigned a compliance with William, renounced all hopes of the crown for himſelf, and profeſſed his ſincere intention of ſupporting the will of Edward, and ſeconding the pretenſions of the duke of Normandy. William, to bind him faſter to his intereſts, beſides offering him one of his daughters in marriage, required him to take an oath that he would fulfil his promiſes; and, in order to render the oath more obligatory, he employed an artifice well ſuited to the ignorance and ſuperſtition of the age. He ſecretly conveyed under the altar, on which Harold agreed to ſwear, the reliques of ſome of the moſt revered martyrs; and, when Harold had taken the oath, he ſhewed him the reliques, and admoniſhed him to obſerve religiouſly an engagement which had been ratified by ſo tremendous a ſanction.[f] The Engliſh nobleman was aſtoniſhed; but, diſſembling his concern, he renewed the ſame profeſſions, and was diſmiſſed with all the marks of mutual confidence by the duke of Normandy.

When Harold found himſelf at liberty, his ambition ſuggeſted caſuiſtry ſufficient to juſtify to him the violation of an oath which had been extorted from him by fear; and which, if fulfilled, might be attended with the ſubjection of his native country to a foreign power. He continued ſtill to practiſe every art of popularity; to increaſe the number of his partiſans; to reconcile the minds of the Engliſh to the idea of his ſucceſſion; to revive their hatred of the Normans; and, by an oſtentation of his power and influence, to deter the timorous Edward from executing his intended deſtination in favour of William. Fortune about this time threw two incidents in his way, by which he was enabled to acquire general favour, and to increaſe the character which he had already attained of virtue and abilities.

The Welſh, though a leſs formidable enemy than the Danes, had long been accuſtomed to infeſt the weſtern borders; and,

after committing ſpoil on the low countries, they uſually made a haſty retreat into their mountains; where they were ſheltered from the purſuit of their enemies, and were ready to ſeize the firſt favourable opportunity of renewing their depredations. Griffith, the reigning prince, had greatly diſtinguiſhed himſelf in thoſe incurſions; and his name had become ſo terrible to the Engliſh, that Harold found he could do nothing more acceptable to the public, and more honourable for himſelf, than the ſuppreſſing of ſo dangerous an enemy. He formed the plan of an expedition againſt Wales; and, having prepared ſome light-armed foot to purſue the natives into their faſtneſſes, ſome cavalry to ſcour the open country, and a ſquadron of ſhips to attack the ſea coaſt, he employed at once all theſe forces againſt the Welſh; proſecuted his advantages with vigour; made no intermiſſion in his aſſaults; and at laſt reduced the enemy to ſuch diſtreſs, that, in order to prevent their total deſtruction, they made a ſacrifice of their prince, whoſe head they cut off and ſent to Harold: and they were content to receive as their ſovereigns two Welſh noblemen, appointed by Edward to rule over them. The other incident was no leſs honourable to Harold.

Toſti, brother of this nobleman, who had been created duke of Northumberland, being of a violent tyrannical temper, had acted with ſuch cruelty and injuſtice that the inhabitants roſe in rebellion, and chaſed him from his government. Morcar and Edwin, two brothers, who poſſeſſed great power in thoſe parts, and who were grandſons of the great duke Leofric, concurred in the inſurrection; and the former, being elected duke, advanced with an army to oppoſe Harold, who was commiſſioned by the king to reduce and chaſtiſe the Northumbrians. Before the armies came to action Morcar, well acquainted with the generous diſpoſition of the Engliſh commander, endeavoured to juſtify his own conduct. He repreſented to Harold that Toſti had behaved

in a manner unworthy of the ſtation to which he was advanced, and no one, not even a brother, could ſupport ſuch tyranny without participating, in ſome degree, of the infamy attending it; that the Northumbrians, accuſtomed to a legal adminiſtration, and regarding it as their birthright, were willing to ſubmit to the king, but required a governor who would pay regard to their rights and privileges; that they had been taught by their anceſtors that death was preferable to ſervitude, and had taken the field determined to periſh rather than ſuffer a renewal of thoſe indignities to which they had ſo long been expoſed; and they truſted that Harold, on reflection, would not defend in another that violent conduct from which he himſelf, in his own government, had always kept at ſo great a diſtance. This vigorous remonſtrance was accompanied with ſuch a detail of facts, ſo well ſupported, that Harold found it prudent to abandon his brother's cauſe; and, returning to Edward, he perſuaded him to pardon the Northumbrians, and to confirm Morcar in the government. He even married the ſiſter of that nobleman;[8] and by his intereſt procured Edwin, the younger brother, to be elected into the government of Mercia. Toſti in a rage departed the kingdom, and took ſhelter in Flanders with earl Baldwin, his father-in-law.

By this marriage Harold broke all meaſures with the duke of Normandy; and William clearly perceived that he could no longer rely on the oaths and promiſes which he had extorted from him. But the Engliſh nobleman was now in ſuch a ſituation that he deemed it no longer neceſſary to diſſemble. He had, in his conduct towards the Northumbrians, given ſuch a ſpecimen of his moderation as had gained him the affections of his countrymen. He ſaw that almoſt all England was engaged in his intereſts; while he himſelf poſſeſſed the government of Weſſex, Morcar that of Northumberland, and Edwin that of Mercia. He now

openly aſpired to the ſucceſſion; and inſiſted that, ſince it was neceſſary, by the confeſſion of all, to ſet aſide the royal family on account of the imbecility of Edgar, the ſole ſurviving heir, there was no one ſo capable of filling the throne as a nobleman of great power, of mature age, of long experience, of approved courage and abilities; who, being a native of the kingdom, would effectually ſecure it againſt the dominion and tyranny of foreigners. Edward, broken with age and infirmities, ſaw the difficulties too great for him to encounter; and, though his inveterate prepoſſeſſions kept him from ſeconding the pretenſions of Harold, he took but feeble and irreſolute ſteps for ſecuring the ſucceſſion to the duke of Normandy.[h] While he continued in this uncertainty he was ſurpriſed by ſickneſs, which brought him to his grave on the fifth of January 1066, in the ſixty-fifth year of his age and twenty-fifth of his reign.

This prince, to whom the monks gave the title of ſaint and confeſſor, was the laſt of the Saxon line that ruled in England. Though his reign was peaceable and fortunate, he owed his proſperity leſs to his own abilities than to the conjunctures of the times. The Danes, employed in other enterpriſes, attempted not thoſe incurſions which had been ſo troubleſome to all his predeceſſors, and fatal to ſome of them. The facility of his diſpoſition made him acquieſce under the government of Godwin and his ſon Harold: and the abilities, as well as the power, of theſe noblemen enabled them, while they were intruſted with authority, to preſerve domeſtic peace and tranquillity. The moſt commendable circumſtance of Edward's government was his attention to the adminiſtration of juſtice, and his compiling for that purpoſe a body of laws, which he collected from the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, and Alfred. This compilation, though now loſt (for the laws that paſs under Edward's name were compoſed [i] afterwards), was long the object of affection to the Engliſh nation.

Edward the Confeſſor was the firſt that touched for the king's evil. The opinion of his ſanctity procured belief to this cure among the people. His ſucceſſors regarded it as a part of their ſtate and grandeur to uphold the ſame opinion. It has been continued down to our time; and the practice was firſt dropped by the preſent royal family, who obſerved that it could no longer give amazement even to the populace, and was attended with ridicule in the eyes of all men of underſtanding.

HAROLD.

1066.

HAROLD had ſo well prepared matters before the death of Edward that he immediately ſtepped into the vacant throne; and his acceſſion was attended with as little oppoſition and diſturbance as if he had ſucceeded by the moſt undoubted hereditary title. The citizens of London were his zealous partiſans; the biſhops and clergy had adopted his cauſe; and all the powerful nobility, connected with him by alliance or friendſhip, willingly ſeconded his pretenſions. The title of Edgar Atheling was ſcarcely mentioned; much leſs the claim of the duke of Normandy: and Harold, aſſembling his partiſans, received the crown from their hands without waiting for the free deliberation of the ſtates, or regularly ſubmitting the queſtion to their determination.[k] If any were averſe to this meaſure they were obliged to conceal their ſentiments; and the new prince, taking a general ſilence for conſent, and founding his title on the ſuppoſed ſuffrages of the people, which appeared unanimous, was, on the day immediately ſucceeding Edward's death, crowned and anointed king by Aldred, archbiſhop of York. The whole nation ſeemed joyfully to acquieſce in his elevation.

The firſt ſymptoms of danger which the king diſcovered came from abroad, and from his own brother Toſti; who had ſubmitted to a voluntary baniſhment in Flanders. Enraged at the ſucceſsful ambition of Harold, to which he himſelf had fallen a victim, he filled the court of Baldwin with complaints of the injuſtice which he had ſuffered; he engaged the intereſt of that family againſt his brother; he endeavoured to form intrigues with ſome of the diſcontented nobles in England; he ſent his emiſſaries to Norway, in order to rouſe to arms the freebooters of that kingdom, and to excite their hopes of reaping advantage from the unſettled ſtate of affairs on the uſurpation of the new king; and, that he might render the combination more formidable, he made a journey to Normandy, in expectation that the duke, who had married Matilda, another daughter of Baldwin, would, in revenge of his own wrongs as well as thoſe of Toſti, ſecond, by his counſels and forces, the projected invaſion of England.[1]

The duke of Normandy, when he firſt received intelligence of Harold's intrigues and acceſſion, had been moved to the higheſt pitch of indignation; but, that he might give the better colour to his pretenſions, he ſent an embaſſy to England, upbraiding that prince with his breach of faith, and ſummoning him to reſign immediately poſſeſſion of the kingdom. Harold replied to the Norman ambaſſadors that the oath, with which he was reproached, had been extorted by the well grounded fear of violence, and could never, for that reaſon, be regarded as obligatory; that he had had no commiſſion, either from the late king or the ſtates of England, who alone could diſpoſe of the crown, to make any tender of the ſucceſſion to the duke of Normandy; and if he, a private perſon, had aſſumed ſo much authority, and had even voluntarily ſworn to ſupport the duke's pretenſions, the oath was unlawful, and it was his duty to ſeize the firſt oppor-

tunity of breaking it; that he had obtained the crown by the unanimous ſuffrages of the people, and ſhould prove himſelf totally unworthy of their favour, did he not ſtrenuouſly maintain thoſe national liberties with whoſe protection they had intruſted him; and that the duke, if he made any attempt by force of arms, ſhould experience the power of an united nation, conducted by a prince, who, ſenſible of the obligations impoſed on him by his royal dignity, was determined that the ſame moment ſhould put a period to his life and to his government.[m]

This anſwer was no other than William expected; and he had previouſly fixed his reſolution of making an attempt upon England. Conſulting only his courage, his reſentment, and his ambition, he overlooked all the difficulties inſeparable from an attack on a great kingdom by ſuch inferior force, and he ſaw only the circumſtances which would facilitate his enterpriſe. He conſidered that England, ever ſince the acceſſion of Canute, had enjoyed profound tranquillity during a period of near fifty years; and it would require time for its ſoldiers, enervated by long peace, to learn diſcipline, and its generals experience. He knew that it was entirely unprovided with fortified towns, by which it could prolong the war; but muſt venture its whole fortune in one deciſive action againſt a veteran enemy, who, being once maſter of the field, would be in a condition to overrun the kingdom. He ſaw that Harold, though he had given proofs of vigour and bravery, had newly mounted a throne which he had acquired by faction, from which he had excluded a very ancient royal family, and which was likely to totter under him by its own inſtability, much more if ſhaken by any violent external impulſe. And he hoped that the very circumſtance of his croſſing the ſea, quitting his own country, and leaving himſelf no hopes of retreat, as it would aſtoniſh the enemy by the boldneſs of the

enterprife, would infpirit his foldiers by defpair, and rouſe them to ſuſtain the reputation of the Norman arms.

The Normans, as they had long been diſtinguiſhed by valour among all the European nations, had at this time attained to the higheſt pitch of military glory. Beſides acquiring by arms ſuch a noble territory in France; beſides defending it againſt continual attempts of the French monarch and all its neighbours; beſides exerting many acts of vigour under their preſent ſovereign; they had, about this very time, revived their ancient fame by the moſt hazardous exploits, and the moſt wonderful ſucceſſes, in the other extremity of Europe. A few Norman adventurers in Italy had acquired ſuch an aſcendant, not only over the Italians and Greeks, but the Germans and Saracens, that they expelled thoſe foreigners, procured to themſelves ample eſtabliſhments, and laid the foundation of the opulent kingdom of Naples and Sicily.[n] Theſe enterpriſes of men who were all of them vaſſals in Normandy, many of them baniſhed for faction and rebellion, excited the ambition of the haughty William; who diſdained, after ſuch examples of fortune and valour, to be deterred from making an attack on a neighbouring country, where he could be ſupported by the whole force of his principality.

The ſituation alſo of Europe inſpired William with hopes that, beſides his brave Normans, he might employ againſt England the flower of the military force which was diſperſed in all the neighbouring ſtates. France, Germany, and the Low Countries, by the progreſs of the feudal inſtitutions, were divided and ſubdivided into many principalities and baronies; and the poſſeſſors, enjoying the civil juriſdiction within themſelves, as well as the right of arms, acted, in many reſpects, as independent ſovereigns, and maintained their properties and privileges leſs by the authority of laws than by their own force and valour. A military ſpirit had univerſally diffuſed itſelf throughout Europe: and the

ſeveral leaders, whoſe minds were elevated by their princely ſituation, greedily embraced the moſt hazardous enterpriſes; and, being accuſtomed to nothing from their infancy but recitals of the ſucceſs attending wars and battles, they were prompted by a natural ambition to imitate thoſe adventures which they heard ſo much celebrated, and which were ſo much exaggerated by the credulity of the age. United, however looſely, by their duty to one ſuperior lord, and by their connexions with the great body of the community to which they belonged, they deſired to ſpread their fame each beyond his own diſtrict; and in all aſſemblies, whether inſtituted for civil deliberations, for military expeditions, or merely for ſhew and entertainment, to outſhine each other by the reputation of ſtrength and proweſs. Hence their genius for chivalry; hence their impatience of peace and tranquillity; and hence their readineſs to embark in any dangerous enterpriſe, how little ſoever intereſted in its failure or ſucceſs.

William, by his power, his courage, and his abilities, had long maintained a pre-eminence among thoſe haughty chieftains; and every one who deſired to ſignalize himſelf by his addreſs in military exerciſes, or his valour in action, had been ambitious of acquiring a reputation in the court and in the armies of Normandy. Entertained with that hoſpitality and courteſy which diſtinguiſhed the age, they had formed attachments with the prince, and greedily attended to the proſpects of the ſignal glory and elevation which he promiſed them in return for their concurrence in an expedition againſt England. The more grandeur there appeared in the attempt, the more it ſuited their romantic ſpirit. The fame of the intended invaſion was already diffuſed every where; multitudes crowded to tender to the duke their ſervice, with that of their vaſſals and retainers;° and William found leſs difficulty in completing his levies than in chooſing the

moſt veteran forces, and in rejecting the offers of thoſe who were impatient to acquire fame under ſo renowned a leader.

Beſides theſe advantages, which William owed to his perſonal valour and good conduct, he was indebted to fortune for procuring him ſome aſſiſtance, and alſo for removing many obſtacles which it was natural for him to expect in an undertaking in which all his neighbours were ſo deeply intereſted. Conan, count of Brittany, was his mortal enemy: in order to throw a damp upon the duke's enterpriſe, he choſe this conjuncture for reviving his claim to Normandy itſelf; and he required that, in caſe of William's ſucceſs againſt England, the poſſeſſion of that duchy ſhould devolve to him.[P] But Conan died ſuddenly after making this demand; and Hoel, his ſucceſſor, inſtead of adopting the malignity, or, more properly ſpeaking, the prudence, of his predeceſſor, zealouſly ſeconded the duke's views; and ſent his eldeſt ſon, Alain Fergant, to ſerve under him with a body of five thouſand Britons. The counts of Anjou and of Flanders encouraged their ſubjects to engage in the expedition; and even the court of France, though it might juſtly fear the aggrandizement of ſo dangerous a vaſſal, purſued not its intereſts on this occaſion with ſufficient vigour and reſolution. Philip I. the reigning monarch, was a minor; and William, having communicated his project to the council, having deſired aſſiſtance, and offered to do homage, in caſe of his ſucceſs, for the crown of England, was indeed openly ordered to lay aſide all thoughts of the enterpriſe; but the earl of Flanders, his father-in-law, being at the head of the regency, favoured underhand his levies, and ſecretly encouraged the adventurous nobility to inliſt under the ſtandard of the duke of Normandy.

The emperor Henry IV. beſides openly giving all his vaſſals permiſſion to embark in this expedition, which ſo much engaged the attention of Europe, promiſed his protection to the duchy

of Normandy during the abſence of the prince, and thereby enabled him to employ his whole force in the invaſion of England.[q] But the moſt important ally, whom William gained by his negociations, was the pope, who had a mighty influence over the ancient barons, no leſs devout in their religious principles than valorous in their military enterpriſes. The Roman pontiff, after an inſenſible progreſs during ſeveral ages of darkneſs and ignorance, began now to lift his head openly above all the princes of Europe; to aſſume the office of a mediator, or even an arbiter, in the quarrels of the greateſt monarchs; to interpoſe in all ſecular affairs; and to obtrude his dictates as ſovereign laws on his obſequious diſciples. It was a ſufficient motive to Alexander II. the reigning pope, for embracing William's quarrel, that he alone had made an appeal to his tribunal, and rendered him umpire of the diſpute between him and Harold; but there were other advantages which that pontiff foreſaw muſt reſult from the conqueſt of England by the Norman arms. That kingdom, though at firſt converted by Romiſh miſſionaries, though it had afterwards advanced ſome farther ſteps towards ſubjection to Rome, maintained ſtill a conſiderable independence in its eccleſiaſtical adminiſtration; and, forming a world within itſelf, entirely ſeparated from the reſt of Europe, it had hitherto proved inacceſſible to thoſe exorbitant claims which ſupported the grandeur of the papacy. Alexander therefore hoped that the French and Norman barons, if ſucceſsful in their enterpriſe, might import into that country a more devoted reverence to the holy ſee, and bring the Engliſh churches to a nearer conformity with thoſe of the continent. He declared immediately in favour of William's claim; pronounced Harold a perjured uſurper; denounced excommunication againſt him and his adherents; and, the more to encourage the duke of Normandy in his enterpriſe, he ſent him a conſecrated banner, and a ring with one of

St. Peter's hairs in it.[r] Thus were all the ambition and violence of that invaſion covered over ſafely with the broad mantle of religion.

The greateſt difficulty which William had to encounter in his preparations aroſe from his own ſubjects in Normandy. The ſtates of the duchy were aſſembled at Liſlebonne; and, ſupplies being demanded for the intended enterpriſe, which promiſed ſo much glory and advantage to their country, there appeared a reluctance in many members, both to grant ſums ſo much beyond the common meaſure of taxes in that age, and to ſet a precedent of performing their military ſervice at a diſtance from their own country. The duke, finding it dangerous to ſolicit them in a body, conferred ſeparately with the richeſt individuals in the province; and, beginning with thoſe on whoſe affections he moſt relied, he gradually engaged all of them to advance the ſums demanded. The count of Longueville ſeconded him in this negociation; as did the count of Mortaigne, Odo, biſhop of Baieux, and eſpecially William Fitz-Oſborne, count of Breteuil, and conſtable of the duchy. Every perſon, when he himſelf was once engaged, endeavoured to bring over others; and at laſt the ſtates themſelves, after ſtipulating that this conceſſion ſhould be no precedent, voted that they would aſſiſt their prince to the utmoſt in his intended enterpriſe.[s]

William had now aſſembled a fleet of three thouſand veſſels, great and ſmall,[t] and had ſelected an army of ſixty thouſand men from among thoſe numerous ſupplies which from every quarter ſolicited to be received into his ſervice. The camp bore a ſplendid yet a martial appearance, from the diſcipline of the men, the beauty and vigour of the horſes, the luſtre of the arms, and the accoutrements of both; but, above all, from the high names of nobility who engaged under the banners of the duke of Normandy. The moſt celebrated were Euſtace, count of Boulogne,

Aimeri de Thouars, Hugh d'Eſtaples, William d'Evreux, Geoffrey de Rotrou, Roger de Beaumont, William de Warenne, Roger de Montgomery, Hugh de Grantmeſnil, Charles Martel, and Geoffrey Giffard.[n] To theſe bold chieftains William held up the ſpoils of England as the prize of their valour; and, pointing to the oppoſite ſhore, called to them that there was the field on which they muſt erect trophies to their name, and fix their eſtabliſhments.

While he was making theſe mighty preparations, the duke, that he might increaſe the number of Harold's enemies, excited the inveterate rancour of Toſti; and encouraged him, in concert with Harold Halfager, king of Norway, to infeſt the coaſts of England. Toſti, having collected about ſixty veſſels in the ports of Flanders, put to ſea; and, after committing ſome depredations on the ſouth and eaſt coaſts, he ſailed to Northumberland, and was there joined by Halfager, who came over with a great armament of three hundred ſail. The combined fleets entered the Humber, and diſembarked the troops, who began to extend their depredations on all ſides; when Morcar, earl of Northumberland, and Edward, earl of Mercia, the king's brother-in-law, having haſtily collected ſome forces, ventured to give them battle. The action ended in the defeat and flight of theſe two noblemen.

Harold, informed of this defeat, haſtened with an army to the protection of his people; and expreſſed the utmoſt ardour to ſhew himſelf worthy of the crown which had been conferred upon him. This prince, though he was not ſenſible of the full extent of his danger from the great combination againſt him, had employed every art of popularity to acquire the affections of the public; and he gave ſo many proofs of an equitable and prudent adminiſtration, that the Engliſh found no reaſon to repent the choice which they had made of a ſovereign. They

flocked from all quarters to join his ſtandard; and as ſoon as he reached the enemy at Standford he found himſelf in a condition to give them battle. The action was bloody; but the victory was deciſive on the ſide of Harold, and ended in the total rout of the Norwegians, together with the death of Toſti and Halfager. Even the Norwegian fleet fell into the hands of Harold; who had the generoſity to give prince Olave, the ſon of Halfager, his liberty, and allow him to depart with twenty veſſels. But he had ſcarcely time to rejoice for this victory, when he received intelligence that the duke of Normandy was landed with a great army in the ſouth of England.

The Norman fleet and army had been aſſembled, early in the ſummer, at the mouth of the ſmall river Dive, and all the troops had been inſtantly embarked; but the winds proved long contrary, and detained them in that harbour. The authority, however, of the duke, the good diſcipline maintained among the ſeamen and ſoldiers, and the great care in ſupplying them with proviſions, had prevented any diſorder; when at laſt the wind became favourable, and enabled them to ſail along the coaſt till they reached St. Valori. There were, however, ſeveral veſſels loſt in this ſhort paſſage; and, as the wind again proved contrary, the army began to imagine that Heaven had declared againſt them, and that, notwithſtanding the pope's benediction, they were deſtined to certain deſtruction. Theſe bold warriors, who deſpiſed real dangers, were very ſubject to the dread of imaginary ones; and many of them began to mutiny, ſome of them even to deſert their colours; when the duke, in order to ſupport their drooping hopes, ordered a proceſſion to be made with the reliques of St. Valori,* and prayers to be ſaid for more favourable weather. The wind inſtantly changed; and, as this incident happened on the eve of the feaſt of St. Michael, the tutelar ſaint of Normandy, the ſoldiers, fancying they ſaw the hand of

Heaven in all theſe concurring circumſtances, ſet out with the greateſt alacrity. They met with no oppoſition on their paſſage. A great fleet, which Harold had aſſembled, and which had cruiſed all ſummer off the Iſle of Wight, had been diſmiſſed, on his receiving falſe intelligence that William, diſcouraged by contrary winds and other accidents, had laid aſide his preparations. The Norman armament, proceeding in great order, arrived, without any material loſs, at Pevenſey in Suſſex; and the army quietly diſembarked. The duke himſelf, as he leaped on ſhore, happened to ſtumble and fall; but had the preſence of mind, it is ſaid, to turn the omen to his advantage, by calling aloud that he had taken poſſeſſion of the country. And a ſoldier, running to a neighbouring cottage, plucked ſome thatch, which, as if giving him ſeizine of the kingdom, he preſented to his general. The joy and alacrity of William and his whole army was ſo great, that they were nowiſe diſcouraged, even when they heard of Harold's great victory over the Norwegians: they ſeemed rather to wait with impatience the arrival of the enemy.

The victory of Harold, though great and honourable, had proved in the main prejudicial to his intereſts, and may be regarded as the immediate cauſe of his ruin. He loſt many of his braveſt officers and ſoldiers in the action; and he diſguſted the reſt by refuſing to diſtribute the Norwegian ſpoils among them. A conduct which was little agreeable to his uſual generoſity of temper; but which his deſire of ſparing the people, in the war that impended over him from the duke of Normandy, had probably occaſioned. He haſtened, by quick marches, to reach this new invader; but, though he was re-enforced at London and other places with freſh troops, he found himſelf alſo weakened by the deſertion of his old ſoldiers, who from fatigue and diſcontent ſecretly withdrew from their colours. His brother

Gurth, a man of bravery and conduct, began to entertain apprehenſions of the event; and remonſtrated with the king that it would be better policy to prolong the war, at leaſt to ſpare his own perſon in the action. He urged to him that the deſperate ſituation of the duke of Normandy made it requiſite for that prince to bring matters to a ſpeedy deciſion, and put his whole fortune on the iſſue of a battle; but that the king of England, in his own country, beloved by his ſubjects, provided with every ſupply, had more certain, and leſs dangerous, means of enſuring to himſelf the victory: that the Norman troops, elated on the one hand with the higheſt hopes, and ſeeing on the other no reſource in caſe of a diſcomfiture, would fight to the laſt extremity; and, being the flower of all the warriors of the continent, muſt be regarded as formidable to the Engliſh: that, if their firſt fire, which is always the moſt dangerous, were allowed to languiſh for want of action; if they were haraſſed with ſmall ſkirmiſhes, ſtraitened in proviſions, and fatigued with the bad weather and deep roads during the winter ſeaſon, which was approaching; they muſt fall an eaſy and a bloodleſs prey to their enemy: that, if a general action were delayed, the Engliſh, ſenſible of the imminent danger to which their properties, as well as liberties, were expoſed from thoſe rapacious invaders, would haſten from all quarters to his aſſiſtance, and would render his army invincible: that, at leaſt, if he thought it neceſſary to hazard a battle, he ought not to expoſe his own perſon; but reſerve, in caſe of diſaſtrous accidents, ſome reſource to the liberty and independence of the kingdom: and that, having once been ſo unfortunate as to be conſtrained to ſwear, and that upon the holy reliques, to ſupport the pretenſions of the duke of Normandy, it were better that the command of the army ſhould be intruſted to another; who, not being bound by thoſe ſacred ties, might give the ſoldiers more aſſured hopes of a proſperous iſſue to the combat.

Harold was deaf to all theſe remonſtrances: elated with his paſt proſperity, as well as ſtimulated by his native courage, he reſolved to give battle in perſon; and for that purpoſe he drew near to the Normans, who had removed their camp and fleet to Haſtings, where they fixed their quarters. He was ſo confident of ſucceſs, that he ſent a meſſage to the duke, promiſing him a ſum of money if he would depart the kingdom without effuſion of blood; but his offer was rejected with diſdain: and William, not to be behind with his enemy in vaunting, ſent him a meſſage by ſome monks, requiring him either to reſign the kingdom, or to hold it of him in fealty, or to ſubmit their cauſe to the arbitration of the pope, or to fight him in ſingle combat. Harold replied that the God of battles would ſoon be the arbiter of all their differences.[y]

The Engliſh and Normans now prepared themſelves for this important deciſion; but the aſpect of things, on the night before the battle, was very different in the two camps. The Engliſh ſpent the time in riot, and jollity, and diſorder; the Normans in ſilence, and in prayer, and in the other functions of their religion.[z] On the morning the duke called together the moſt conſiderable of his commanders, and made them a ſpeech ſuitable to the occaſion. He repreſented to them that the event which they and he had long wiſhed for was approaching; the whole fortune of the war now depended on their ſwords, and would be decided in a ſingle action: that never army had greater motives for exerting a vigorous courage, whether they conſidered the prize which would attend their victory, or the inevitable deſtruction which muſt enſue upon their diſcomfiture: that, if their martial and veteran bands could once break thoſe raw ſoldiers who had raſhly dared to approach them, they conquered a kingdom at one blow, and were juſtly entitled to all its poſſeſſions as the reward of their proſperous valour: that, on the contrary,

if they remitted in the leaſt their wonted proweſs, an enraged enemy hung upon their rear, the ſea met them in their retreat, and an ignominious death was the certain puniſhment of their imprudent cowardice: that, by collecting ſo numerous and brave a hoſt, he had enſured every human means of conqueſt; and the commander of the enemy, by his criminal conduct, had given him juſt cauſe to hope for the favour of the Almighty, in whoſe hands alone lay the event of wars and battles: and that a perjured uſurper, anathematized by the ſovereign pontiff, and conſcious of his own breach of faith, would be ſtruck with terror on their appearance, and would prognoſticate to himſelf that fate which his multiplied crimes had ſo juſtly merited.[a] The duke next divided his army into three lines: the firſt, led by Montgomery, conſiſted of archers and light-armed infantry: the ſecond, commanded by Martel, was compoſed of his braveſt battalions, heavy armed, and ranged in cloſe order: his cavalry, at whoſe head he placed himſelf, formed the third line; and were ſo diſpoſed that they ſtretched beyond the infantry, and flanked each wing of the army.[b] He ordered the ſignal of battle to be given; and the whole army, moving at once, and ſinging the hymn or ſong of Roland, the famous peer of Charlemagne,[c] advanced in order and with alacrity towards the enemy.

Harold had ſeized the advantage of a riſing ground; and, having likewiſe drawn ſome trenches to ſecure his flanks, he reſolved to ſtand upon the defenſive, and to avoid all action with the cavalry, in which he was inferior. The Kentiſh men were placed in the van, a poſt which they had always claimed as their due; the Londoners guarded the ſtandard; and the king himſelf, accompanied by his two valiant brothers Gurth and Leofwin, diſmounting, placed himſelf at the head of his infantry, and expreſſed his reſolution to conquer, or to periſh in the action. The firſt attack of the Normans was deſperate, but was received with

equal valour by the Engliſh; and, after a furious combat, which remained long undecided, the former, overcome by the difficulty of the ground, and hard preſſed by the enemy, began firſt to relax their vigour, then to retreat; and confuſion was ſpreading among the ranks when William, who found himſelf on the brink of deſtruction, haſtened with a ſelect band to the relief of his diſmayed forces. His preſence reſtored the action; the Engliſh were obliged to retire with loſs; and the duke, ordering his ſecond line to advance, renewed the attack with freſh forces and with redoubled courage. Finding that the enemy, aided by the advantage of ground, and animated by the example of their prince, ſtill made a vigorous reſiſtance, he tried a ſtratagem, which was very delicate in its management, but which ſeemed adviſeable in his deſperate ſituation; where, if he gained not a deciſive victory, he was totally undone. He commanded his troops to make a haſty retreat, and to allure the enemy from their ground by the appearance of flight. The artifice ſucceeded againſt thoſe unexperienced ſoldiers; who, heated by the action and ſanguine in their hopes, precipitately followed the Normans into the plain. William gave orders that at once the infantry ſhould face about upon their purſuers, and the cavalry make an aſſault upon their wings, and both of them purſue the advantage which the ſurpriſe and terror of the enemy muſt give them in that critical and deciſive moment. The Engliſh were repulſed with great ſlaughter, and driven back to the hill; where, being rallied by the bravery of Harold, they were able, notwithſtanding their loſs, to maintain the poſt and continue the combat. The duke tried the ſame ſtratagem a ſecond time with the ſame ſucceſs; but, even after this double advantage, he ſtill found a great body of the Engliſh, who, maintaining themſelves in firm array, ſeemed determined to diſpute the victory to the laſt extremity. He ordered his heavy-armed infantry to make an aſ-

THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

ſault upon them, while his archers, placed behind, ſhould gall the enemy; who were expoſed by the ſituation of the ground, and who were intent in defending themſelves againſt the ſwords and ſpears of the aſſailants. By this diſpoſition he at laſt prevailed: Harold was ſlain by an arrow while he was combating with great bravery at the head of his men; his two brothers ſhared the ſame fate; and the Engliſh, diſcouraged by the fall of thoſe princes, gave ground on all ſides, and were purſued with great ſlaughter by the victorious Normans. A few troops, however, of the vanquiſhed had ſtill the courage to turn upon their purſuers; and, attacking them in deep and miry ground, obtained ſome revenge for the ſlaughter and diſhonour of the day. But the appearance of the duke obliged them to ſeek their ſafety by flight; and darkneſs ſaved them from any farther purſuit by the enemy.

Thus was gained by William, duke of Normandy, the great and deciſive victory of Haſtings, after a battle which was fought from morning till ſunſet, and which ſeemed worthy, by the heroic valour diſplayed by both armies, and by both commanders, to decide the fate of a mighty kingdom. William had three horſes killed under him; and there fell near fifteen thouſand men on the ſide of the Normans. The loſs was ſtill more conſiderable on that of the vanquiſhed, beſides the death of the king and his two brothers. The dead body of Harold was brought to William, and was generouſly reſtored without ranſom to his mother. The Norman army left not the field of battle without giving thanks to Heaven in the moſt ſolemn manner for their victory; and the prince, having refreſhed his troops, prepared to puſh to the utmoſt his advantage againſt the divided, diſmayed, and diſcomfited, Engliſh.

APPENDIX I.

THE ANGLO SAXON GOVERNMENT AND MANNERS.

FIRST SAXON GOVERNMENT....SUCCESSION OF THE KINGS....THE WITTENAGEMOT....THE ARISTOCRACY....THE SEVERAL ORDERS OF MEN....COURTS OF JUSTICE....CRIMINAL LAW....RULES OF PROOF....MILITARY FORCE....PUBLIC REVENUE....VALUE OF MONEY....MANNERS.

THE government of the Germans, and that of all the northern nations, who eſtabliſhed themſelves on the ruins of Rome, was always extremely free; and thoſe fierce people, accuſtomed to independence and inured to arms, were more guided by perſuaſion than authority in the ſubmiſſion which they paid to their princes. The military deſpotiſm which had taken place in the Roman empire, and which, previouſly to the irruption of thoſe conquerors, had ſunk the genius of men, and deſtroyed every noble principle of ſcience and virtue, was unable to reſiſt the vigorous efforts of a free people; and Europe, as from a new epoch, rekindled her ancient ſpirit, and ſhook off the baſe ſervitude to arbitrary will and authority under which ſhe had ſo long laboured. The free conſtitutions then eſtabliſhed, however impaired by the encroachments of ſucceeding princes, ſtill preſerve

an air of independence and legal adminiſtration, which diſtinguiſh the European nations; and, if that part of the globe maintain ſentiments of liberty, honour, equity, and valour, ſuperior to the reſt of mankind, it owes theſe advantages chiefly to the ſeeds implanted by thoſe generous barbarians.

FIRST SAXON GOVERNMENT.

THE Saxons, who ſubdued Britain, as they enjoyed great liberty in their own country, obſtinately retained that invaluable poſſeſſion in their new ſettlement; and they imported into this iſland the ſame principles of independence which they had inherited from their anceſtors. The chieftains, (for ſuch they were more properly than kings or princes) who commanded them in thoſe military expeditions, ſtill poſſeſſed a very limited authority; and, as the Saxons exterminated, rather than ſubdued, the ancient inhabitants, they were indeed tranſplanted into a new territory, but preſerved unaltered all their civil and military inſtitutions. The language was pure Saxon; even the names of places, which often remain while the tongue entirely changes, were almoſt all affixed by the conquerors; the manners and cuſtoms were wholly German; and the ſame picture of a fierce and bold liberty, which is drawn by the maſterly pencil of Tacitus, will ſuit thoſe founders of the Engliſh government. The king, ſo far from being inveſted with arbitrary power, was only conſidered as the firſt among the citizens; his authority depended more on his perſonal qualities than on his ſtation; he was even ſo far on a level with the people, that a ſtated price was fixed for his head, and a legal fine was levied upon his murderer; which, though proportionate to his ſtation, and ſuperior to that paid for the life of a ſubject, was a ſenſible mark of his ſubordination to the community.

SUCCESSION OF THE KINGS.

It is eaſy to imagine that an independent people, ſo little reſtrained by law and cultivated by ſcience, would not be very ſtrict in maintaining a regular ſucceſſion of their princes. Though they paid great regard to the royal family, and aſcribed to it an undiſputed ſuperiority, they either had no rule, or none that was ſteadily obſerved, in filling the vacant throne; and preſent convenience, in that emergency, was more attended to than general principles. We are not, however, to ſuppoſe that the crown was conſidered as altogether elective; and that a regular plan was traced by the conſtitution for ſupplying, by the ſuffrages of the people, every vacancy made by the demiſe of the firſt magiſtrate. If any king left a ſon of an age and capacity fit for government, the young prince naturally ſtepped into the throne; if he was a minor, his uncle, or the next prince of the blood, was promoted to the government, and left the ſceptre to his poſterity. Any ſovereign, by taking previous meaſures with the leading men, had it greatly in his power to appoint his ſucceſſor. All theſe changes, and indeed the ordinary adminiſtration of government, required the expreſs concurrence, or at leaſt the tacit acquieſcence, of the people; but poſſeſſion, however obtained, was extremely apt to ſecure their obedience; and the idea of any right, which was once excluded, was but feeble and imperfect. This is ſo much the caſe in all barbarous monarchies, and occurs ſo often in the hiſtory of the Anglo Saxons, that we cannot conſiſtently entertain any other notion of their government. The idea of an hereditary ſucceſſion in authority is ſo natural to men, and is ſo much fortified by the uſual rule in tranſmitting private poſſeſſions, that it muſt retain a great influence on every ſociety which does not exclude it by the refine-

ments of a republican conſtitution. But, as there is a material difference between government and private poſſeſſions, and every man is not as much qualified for exerciſing the one as for enjoying the other, a people, who are not ſenſible of the general advantages attending a fixed rule, are apt to make great leaps in the ſucceſſion, and frequently to paſs over the perſon who, had he poſſeſſed the requiſite years and abilities, would have been thought entitled to the ſovereignty. Thus theſe monarchies are not, ſtrictly ſpeaking, either elective or hereditary; and, though the deſtination of a prince may often be followed in appointing his ſucceſſor, they can as little be regarded as wholly teſtamentary. The ſtates, by their ſuffrage, may ſometimes eſtabliſh a ſovereign; but they more frequently recogniſe the perſon whom they find eſtabliſhed. A few great men take the lead; the people, overawed and influenced, acquieſce in the government; and the reigning prince, provided he be of the royal family, paſſes undiſputedly for the legal ſovereign.

THE WITTENAGEMOT.

It is confeſſed that our knowledge of the Anglo Saxon hiſtory and antiquities is too imperfect to afford us means of determining, with certainty, all the prerogatives of the crown and privileges of the people, or of giving an exact delineation of that government. It is probable alſo that the conſtitution might be ſomewhat different in the different kingdoms of the Heptarchy; and that it changed conſiderably during the courſe of ſix centuries, which elapſed from the firſt invaſion of the Saxons till the Norman conqueſt.[a] But moſt of theſe differences and changes, with their cauſes and effects, are unknown to us. It only appears that at all times, and in all the kingdoms, there was a national council, called a Wittenagemot, or aſſembly of the wiſe

men (for that is the import of the term), whoſe conſent was requiſite for enacting laws, and for ratifying the chief acts of public adminiſtration. The preambles to all the laws of Ethelbert, Ina, Alfred, Edward the Elder, Athelſtan, Edmond, Edgar, Ethelred, and Edward the Confeſſor; even thoſe to the laws of Canute, though a kind of conqueror; put this matter beyond controverſy, and carry proofs every where of a limited and legal government. But who were the conſtituent members of this Wittenagemot has not been determined with certainty by antiquaries. It is agreed that the biſhops and abbots[e] were an eſſential part; and it is alſo evident, from the tenor of thoſe ancient laws, that the Wittenagemot enacted ſtatutes which regulated the eccleſiaſtical as well as civil government, and that thoſe dangerous principles, by which the church is totally ſevered from the ſtate, were hitherto unknown to the Anglo Saxons.[f] It alſo appears that the aldermen, or governors of counties, who after the Daniſh times were often called earls,[g] were admitted into this council, and gave their conſent to the public ſtatutes. But, beſides the prelates and aldermen, there is alſo mention of the wites, or wiſe men, as a component part of the Wittenagemot; but who theſe were is not ſo clearly aſcertained by the laws or the hiſtory of that period. The matter would probably be of difficult diſcuſſion, even were it examined impartially; but, as our modern parties have choſen to divide on this point, the queſtion has been diſputed with the greater obſtinacy; and the arguments on both ſides have become, on that account, the more captious and deceitful. Our monarchical faction maintain that theſe wites, or ſapientes, were the judges, or men learned in the law; the popular faction aſſert them to be repreſentatives of the boroughs, or what we now call the commons.

The expreſſions employed by all ancient hiſtorians, in mentioning the Wittenagemot, ſeem to contradict the latter ſuppo-

ſition. The members are almoſt always called the principes, ſatrapæ, optimates, magnates, proceres; terms which ſeem to ſuppoſe an ariſtocracy, and to exclude the commons. The boroughs alſo, from the low ſtate of commerce, were ſo ſmall and ſo poor, and the inhabitants lived in ſuch dependance on the great men,[h] that it ſeems nowiſe probable they would be admitted as a part of the national councils. The commons are well known to have had no ſhare in the governments eſtabliſhed by the Franks, Burgundians, and other northern nations; and we may conclude that the Saxons, who remained longer barbarous and uncivilized than thoſe tribes, would never think of conferring ſuch an extraordinary privilege on trade and induſtry. The military profeſſion alone was honourable among all thoſe conquerors; the warriors ſubſiſted by their poſſeſſions in land; they became conſiderable by their influence over their vaſſals, retainers, tenants, and ſlaves; and it requires ſtrong proof to convince us that they would admit any, of a rank ſo much inferior as the burgeſſes, to ſhare with them in the legiſlative authority. Tacitus indeed affirms that, among the ancient Germans, the conſent of all the members of the community was required in every important deliberation; but he ſpeaks not of repreſentatives: and this ancient practice, mentioned by the Roman hiſtorian, could only have place in ſmall tribes, where every citizen might, without inconvenience, be aſſembled upon any extraordinary emergency. After principalities became extenſive; after the difference of property had formed diſtinctions more important than thoſe which aroſe from perſonal ſtrength and valour; we may conclude that the national aſſemblies muſt have been more limited in their number, and compoſed only of the more conſiderable citizens.

But, though we muſt exclude the burgeſſes, or commons, from the Saxon Wittenagemot, there is ſome neceſſity for ſuppoſing

that this aſſembly conſiſted of other members than the prelates, abbots, aldermen, and the judges, or privy council. For, as all theſe, excepting ſome of the eccleſiaſtics,[i] were anciently appointed by the king, had there been no other legiſlative authority, the royal power had been in a great meaſure abſolute, contrary to the tenor of all the hiſtorians, and to the practice of all the northern nations. We may therefore conclude that the more conſiderable proprietors of land were, without any election, conſtituent members of the national aſſembly. There is reaſon to think that forty hides, or between four and five thouſand acres, was the eſtate requiſite for entitling the poſſeſſor to this honourable privilege. We find a paſſage in an ancient author,[k] by which it appears that a perſon of very noble birth, even one allied to the crown, was not eſteemed a princeps (the term uſually employed by ancient hiſtorians when the Wittenagemot is mentioned) till he had acquired a fortune of that amount. Nor need we imagine that the public council would become diſorderly or confuſed by admitting ſo great a multitude. The landed property of England was probably in few hands during the Saxon times, at leaſt during the latter part of that period; and, as men had hardly any ambition to attend thoſe public councils, there was no danger of the aſſembly's becoming too numerous for the diſpatch of the little buſineſs which was brought before them.

THE ARISTOCRACY.

It is certain that, whatever we may determine concerning the conſtituent members of the Wittenagemot, in whom, with the king, the legiſlature reſided, the Anglo Saxon government, in the period preceding the Norman conqueſt, was become extremely ariſtocratical; the royal authority was very limited; the

people, even if admitted to that aſſembly, were of little or no weight and conſideration. We have hints given us in hiſtorians of the great power and riches of particular noblemen; and it could not but happen, after the abolition of the Heptarchy, when the king lived at a diſtance from the provinces, that thoſe great proprietors, who reſided on their eſtates, would much augment their authority over their vaſſals and retainers, and over all the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. Hence the immeaſurable power aſſumed by Harold, Godwin, Leofric, Siward, Morcar, Edwin, Edric, and Alfric; who controlled the authority of the kings, and rendered themſelves quite neceſſary in the government. The two latter, though deteſted by the people on account of their joining a foreign enemy, ſtill preſerved their power and influence; and we may therefore conclude that their authority was founded, not on popularity, but on family rights and poſſeſſions. There is one Athelſtan mentioned in the reign of the king of that name, who is called alderman of all England, and is ſaid to be half king; though the monarch himſelf was a prince of valour and abilities.[l] And we find that in the latter Saxon times, and in theſe alone, the great offices went from father to ſon, and became in a manner hereditary in the families.[m]

The circumſtances attending the invaſions of the Danes would alſo ſerve much to increaſe the power of the principal nobility. Thoſe freebooters made unexpected inroads on all quarters; and there was a neceſſity that each county ſhould reſiſt them by its own force, and under the conduct of its own nobility and its own magiſtrates. For the ſame reaſon that a general war, managed by the united efforts of the whole ſtate, commonly augments the power of the crown, thoſe private wars and inroads turned to the advantage of the aldermen and nobles.

Among that military and turbulent people, ſo averſe to commerce and the arts, and ſo little inured to induſtry, juſtice was

commonly very ill adminiſtered, and great oppreſſion and violence ſeem to have prevailed. Theſe diſorders would be increaſed by the exorbitant power of the ariſtocracy; and would, in their turn, contribute to increaſe it. Men, not daring to rely on the guardianſhip of the laws, were obliged to devote themſelves to the ſervice of ſome chieftain, whoſe orders they followed, even to the diſturbance of the government, or the injury of their fellow citizens; and who afforded them, in return, protection from any inſult or injuſtice by ſtrangers. Hence we find, by the extracts which Dr. Brady has given us from Domeſday, that almoſt all the inhabitants, even of towns, had placed themſelves under the clientſhip of ſome particular nobleman, whoſe patronage they purchaſed by annual payments, and whom they were obliged to conſider as their ſovereign, more than the king himſelf, or even the legiſlature.[n] A client, though a freeman, was ſuppoſed ſo much to belong to his patron, that his murderer was obliged by law to pay a fine to the latter, as a compenſation for his loſs; in like manner as he paid a fine to the maſter for the murder of his ſlave.[o] Men who were of a more conſiderable rank, but not powerful enough each to ſupport himſelf by his own independent authority, entered into formal confederacies with each other, and compoſed a kind of ſeparate community, which rendered itſelf formidable to all aggreſſors. Dr. Hickes has preſerved a curious Saxon bond of this kind, which he calls a Sodalitium, and which contains many particulars characteriſtical of the manners and cuſtoms of the times.[p] All the aſſociates are there ſaid to be gentlemen of Cambridgeſhire; and they ſwear before the holy reliques to obſerve their confederacy, and to be faithful to each other. They promiſe to bury any of the aſſociates who dies in whatever place he had appointed; to contribute to his funeral charges, and to attend at his interment; and whoever is wanting in this laſt duty binds himſelf to pay a meaſure

of honey. When any of the aſſociates is in danger, and calls for the aſſiſtance of his fellows, they promiſe, beſides flying to his ſuccour, to give information to the ſheriff; and, if he be negligent in protecting the perſon expoſed to danger, they engage to levy a fine of one pound upon him. If the preſident of the ſociety himſelf be wanting in this particular, he binds himſelf to pay one pound; unleſs he has the reaſonable excuſe of ſickneſs, or of duty to his ſuperior. When any of the aſſociates is murdered they are to exact eight pounds from the murderer; and, if he refuſe to pay it, they are to proſecute him for the ſum at their joint expenſe. If any of the aſſociates, who happens to be poor, kill a man, the ſociety are to contribute, by a certain proportion, to pay his fine: a mark a-piece if the fine be ſeven hundred ſhillings; leſs if the perſon killed be a clown or ceorle; the half of that ſum again if he be a Welſhman. But where any of the aſſociates kills a man wilfully, and without provocation, he muſt himſelf pay the fine. If any of the aſſociates kill any of his fellows in a like criminal manner, beſides paying the uſual fine to the relations of the deceaſed, he muſt pay eight pounds to the ſociety, or renounce the benefit of it: in which caſe they bind themſelves, under the penalty of one pound, never to eat or drink with him, except in the preſence of the king, biſhop, or alderman. There are other regulations to protect themſelves and their ſervants from all injuries, to revenge ſuch as are committed, and to prevent their giving abuſive language to each other; and the fine, which they engage to pay for this laſt offence, is a meaſure of honey.

It is not to be doubted but a confederacy of this kind muſt have been a great ſource of friendſhip and attachment, when men lived in perpetual danger from enemies, robbers, and oppreſſors, and received protection chiefly from their perſonal valour, and from the aſſiſtance of their friends or patrons. As

animoſities were then more violent, connexions were alſo more intimate, whether voluntary or derived from blood; the moſt remote degree of propinquity was regarded; an indelible memory of benefits was preſerved; ſevere vengeance was taken for injuries, both from a point of honour and as the beſt means of future ſecurity; and, the civil union being weak, many private engagements were contracted, in order to ſupply its place, and to procure men that ſafety which the laws and their own innocence were not alone able to enſure to them.

On the whole, notwithſtanding the ſeeming liberty, or rather licentiouſneſs, of the Anglo Saxons, the great body even of the free citizens, in thoſe ages, really enjoyed much leſs true liberty than where the execution of the laws is the moſt ſevere, and where ſubjects are reduced to the ſtricteſt ſubordination and dependance on the civil magiſtrate. The reaſon is derived from the exceſs itſelf of that liberty. Men muſt guard themſelves at any price againſt inſults and injuries; and, where they receive not protection from the laws and magiſtrate, they will ſeek it by ſubmiſſion to ſuperiors, and by herding in ſome private confederacy which acts under the direction of a powerful leader. And thus all anarchy is the immediate cauſe of tyranny, if not over the ſtate, at leaſt over many of the individuals.

Security was provided by the Saxon laws to all members of the Wittenagemot, both in going and returning, except they were notorious thieves and robbers.

THE SEVERAL ORDERS OF MEN.

THE German Saxons, as the other nations of that continent, were divided into three ranks of men; the noble, the free, and the ſlaves.[q] This diſtinction they brought over with them into Britain.

The nobles were called thanes; and were of two kinds, the king's thanes and leſſer thanes. The latter ſeem to have been dependent on the former; and to have received lands, for which they paid rent, ſervices, or attendance, in peace and war.[r] We know of no title which raiſed any one to the rank of thane, except noble birth and the poſſeſſion of land. The former was always much regarded by all the German nations, even in their moſt barbarous ſtate; and, as the Saxon nobility, having little credit, could ſcarcely burden their eſtates with much debt, and as the commons had little trade or induſtry by which they could accumulate riches, theſe two ranks of men, even though they were not ſeparated by poſitive laws, might remain long diſtinct, and the noble families continue many ages in opulence and ſplendour. There were no middle ranks of men, that could gradually mix with their ſuperiors, and inſenſibly procure to themſelves honour and diſtinction. If by any extraordinary accident a mean perſon acquired riches, a circumſtance ſo ſingular made him be known and remarked; he became the object of envy, as well as of indignation, to all the nobles; he would have great difficulty to defend what he had acquired; and he would find it impoſſible to protect himſelf from oppreſſion, except by courting the patronage of ſome great chieftain, and paying a large price for his ſafety.

There are two ſtatutes among the Saxon laws which ſeem calculated to confound thoſe different ranks of men; that of Athelſtan, by which a merchant, who had made three long ſea voyages on his own account, was entitled to the quality of thane;[s] and that of the ſame prince, by which a ceorle or huſbandman, who had been able to purchaſe five hides of land, and had a chapel, a kitchen, a hall, and a bell, was raiſed to the ſame [t] diſtinction. But the opportunities were ſo few, by which a merchant or ceorle could thus exalt himſelf above his rank, that the law could

never overcome the reigning prejudices; the diſtinction between noble and baſe blood would ſtill be indelible; and the well born thanes would entertain the higheſt contempt for thoſe legal and factitious ones. Though we are not informed of any of theſe circumſtances by ancient hiſtorians, they are ſo much founded on the nature of things that we may admit them as a neceſſary and infallible conſequence of the ſituation of the kingdom during thoſe ages.

The cities appear by Domeſday book to have been at the conqueſt little better than villages.[u] York itſelf, though it was always the ſecond, at leaſt the third,[x] city in England, and was the capital of a great province which never was thoroughly united with the reſt, contained then but fourteen hundred and eighteen families.[y] Malmeſbury tells us [z] that the great diſtinction between the Anglo Saxon nobility and the French or Norman was, that the latter built magnificent and ſtately caſtles; whereas the former conſumed their immenſe fortunes in riot and hoſpitality, and in mean houſes. We may thence infer that the arts in general were much leſs advanced in England than in France; a greater number of idle ſervants and retainers lived about the great families; and, as theſe, even in France, were powerful enough to diſturb the execution of the laws, we may judge of the authority acquired by the ariſtocracy in England. When earl Godwin beſieged the Confeſſor in London, he ſummoned from all parts his huſcarles, or houſeceorles and retainers, and thereby conſtrained his ſovereign to accept of the conditions which he was pleaſed to impoſe upon him.

The lower rank of freemen were denominated ceorles among the Anglo Saxons; and, where they were induſtrious, they were chiefly employed in huſbandry; whence a ceorle and a huſbandman became in a manner ſynonymous terms. They cultivated the farms of the nobility or thanes, for which they paid rent;

and they ſeem to have been removable at pleaſure; for there is little mention of leaſes among the Anglo Saxons. The pride of the nobility, together with the general ignorance of writing, muſt have rendered thoſe contracts very rare, and muſt have kept the huſbandmen in a dependent condition. The rents of farms were then chiefly paid in kind.[a]

But the moſt numerous rank by far in the community ſeems to have been the ſlaves or villains; who were the property of their lords, and were conſequently incapable themſelves of poſſeſſing any property. Dr. Brady aſſures us, from a ſurvey of Domeſday book,[b] that, in all the counties of England, the far greater part of the land was occupied by them; and that the huſbandmen, and ſtill more the ſocmen, who were tenants that could not be removed at pleaſure, were very few in compariſon. This was not the caſe with the German nations, as far as we can collect from the account given us by Tacitus. The perpetual wars in the Heptarchy, and the depredations of the Danes, ſeem to have been the cauſe of this great alteration with the Anglo Saxons. Priſoners taken in battle, or carried off in the frequent inroads, were then reduced to ſlavery; and became, by right of war,[c] entirely at the diſpoſal of their lords. Great property in the nobles, eſpecially if joined to an irregular adminiſtration of juſtice, naturally favours the power of the ariſtocracy; but ſtill more ſo if the practice of ſlavery be admitted, and has become very common. The nobility not only poſſeſs the influence which always attends riches, but alſo the power which the laws give them over their ſlaves and villains. It then becomes difficult, and almoſt impoſſible, for a private man to remain altogether free and independent.

There were two kinds of ſlaves among the Anglo Saxons; houſehold ſlaves, after the manner of the ancients; and prædial or ruſtic, after the manner of the Germans.[d] Theſe latter re-

ſembled the ſerfs, which are at preſent to be met with in Poland, Denmark, and ſome parts of Germany. The power of a maſter over his ſlaves was not unlimited among the Anglo Saxons, as it was among their anceſtors. If a man beat out his ſlave's eye or teeth, the ſlave recovered his liberty;[e] if he killed him, he paid a fine to the king, provided the ſlave died within a day after the wound or blow, otherwiſe it paſſed [f] unpuniſhed. The ſelling of themſelves or children to ſlavery was always the practice among the German nations,[g] and was continued by the Anglo Saxons.[h]

The great lords and abbots among the Anglo Saxons poſſeſſed a criminal juriſdiction within their territories; and could puniſh, without appeal, any thieves or robbers whom they caught [i] there. This inſtitution muſt have had a very contrary effect to that which was intended, and muſt have procured robbers a ſure protection on the lands of ſuch noblemen as did not ſincerely mean to diſcourage crimes and violence.

COURTS OF JUSTICE.

But, though the general ſtrain of the Anglo Saxon government ſeems to have become ariſtocratical, there were ſtill conſiderable remains of the ancient democracy; which were not indeed ſufficient to protect the loweſt of the people without the patronage of ſome great lord, but might give ſecurity, and even ſome degree of dignity, to the gentry or inferior nobility. The adminiſtration of juſtice, in particular, by the courts of the decennary, the hundred, and the county, was well calculated to defend general liberty, and to reſtrain the power of the nobles. In the county courts, or ſhiremotes, all the freeholders were aſſembled twice a year, and received appeals from the inferior courts. They there decided all cauſes, eccleſiaſtical as well as civil; and

the biſhop, together with the alderman or earl, preſided over them.[k] The affair was determined in a ſummary manner, without much pleading, formality, or delay, by a majority of voices; and the biſhop and alderman had no farther authority than to keep order among the freeholders, and interpoſe with their opinion.[l] Where juſtice was denied during three ſeſſions by the hundred, and then by the county court, there lay an appeal to the king's court;[m] but this was not practiſed on ſlight occaſions. The alderman received a third of the fines levied in thoſe courts;[n] and, as moſt of the puniſhments were then pecuniary, this perquiſite formed a conſiderable part of the profits belonging to his office. The two thirds alſo, which went to the king, made no contemptible part of the public revenue. Any freeholder was fined who abſented himſelf thrice from theſe courts.[o]

As the extreme ignorance of the age made deeds and writings very rare, the county or hundred court was the place where the moſt remarkable civil tranſactions were finiſhed, in order to preſerve the memory of them and prevent all future diſputes. Here teſtaments were promulgated, ſlaves manumitted, bargains of ſale concluded; and ſometimes, for greater ſecurity, the moſt conſiderable of theſe deeds were inſerted in the blank leaves of the pariſh Bible, which thus became a kind of regiſter too ſacred to be falſified. It was not unuſual to add to the deed an imprecation on all ſuch as ſhould be guilty of that crime.[p]

Among a people, who lived in ſo ſimple a manner as the Anglo Saxons, the judicial power is always of greater importance than the legiſlative. There were few or no taxes impoſed by the ſtates; there were few ſtatutes enacted; and the nation was leſs governed by laws than by cuſtoms, which admitted a great latitude of interpretation. Though it ſhould, therefore, be allowed that the Wittenagemot was altogether compoſed of the principal nobility, the county courts, where all the freeholders

were admitted, and which regulated all the daily occurrences of life, formed a wide baſis for the government, and were no contemptible checks on the ariſtocracy. But there is another power ſtill more important than either the judicial or legiſlative; to wit, the power of injuring or ſerving by immediate force and violence, for which it is difficult to obtain redreſs in courts of juſtice. In all extenſive governments, where the execution of the laws is feeble, this power naturally falls into the hands of the principal nobility; and the degree of it which prevails cannot be determined ſo much by the public ſtatutes as by ſmall incidents in hiſtory, by particular cuſtoms, and ſometimes by the reaſon and nature of things. The Highlands of Scotland have long been entitled by law to every privilege of Britiſh ſubjects; but it was not till very lately that the common people could in fact enjoy theſe privileges.

The powers of all the members of the Anglo Saxon government are diſputed among hiſtorians and antiquaries. The extreme obſcurity of the ſubject, even though faction had never entered into the queſtion, would naturally have begotten thoſe controverſies. But the great influence of the lords over their ſlaves and tenants, the clientſhip of the burghers, the total want of a middling rank of men, the extent of the monarchy, the looſe execution of the laws, the continued diſorders and convulſions of the ſtate; all theſe circumſtances evince that the Anglo Saxon government became at laſt extremely ariſtocratical: and the events, during the period immediately preceding the conqueſt, confirm this inference or conjecture.

CRIMINAL LAW.

Both the puniſhments inflicted by the Anglo Saxon courts of judicature, and the methods of proof employed in all cauſes,

appear ſomewhat ſingular, and are very different from thoſe which prevail at preſent among all civilized nations.

We muſt conceive that the ancient Germans were little removed from the original ſtate of nature; the ſocial confederacy among them was more martial than civil; they had chiefly in view the means of attack or defence againſt public enemies, not thoſe of protection againſt their fellow citizens; their poſſeſſions were ſo ſlender and ſo equal, that they were not expoſed to great danger; and the natural bravery of the people made every man truſt to himſelf, and to his particular friends, for his defence or vengeance. This defect in the political union drew much cloſer the knot of particular confederacies; an inſult upon any man was regarded by all his relations and aſſociates as a common injury; they were bound by honour, as well as by a ſenſe of common intereſt, to revenge his death, or any violence which he had ſuffered; they retaliated on the aggreſſor by like acts of violence; and, if he were protected, as was natural and uſual, by his own clan, the quarrel was ſpread ſtill wider, and bred endleſs diſorders in the nation.

The Friſians, a tribe of the Germans, had never advanced beyond this wild and imperfect ſtate of ſociety; and the right of private revenge ſtill remained among them unlimited and uncontrolled.[q] But the other German nations, in the age of Tacitus, had made one ſtep farther towards completing the political or civil union. Though it ſtill continued to be an indiſpenſable point of honour for every clan to revenge the death or injury of a member, the magiſtrate had acquired a right of interpoſing in the quarrel, and of accommodating the difference. He obliged the perſon maimed or injured, and the relations of one killed, to accept of a preſent from the aggreſſor and his relations[r] as a compenſation for the injury,[s] and to drop all farther proſecution of revenge. That the accommodation of one quarrel might not

be the ſource of more, this preſent was fixed and certain, according to the rank of the perſon killed or injured; and was commonly paid in cattle, the chief property of thoſe rude and uncultivated nations. A preſent of this kind gratified the revenge of the injured family, by the loſs which the aggreſſor ſuffered; it ſatisfied their pride, by the ſubmiſſion which it expreſſed; it diminiſhed their regret for the loſs or injury of a kinſman, by their acquiſition of new property; and thus general peace was for a moment reſtored to the ſociety.[t]

But, when the German nations had been ſettled ſome time in the provinces of the Roman empire, they made ſtill another ſtep towards a more cultivated life; and their criminal juſtice gradually improved and refined itſelf. The magiſtrate, whoſe office it was to guard public peace and to ſuppreſs private animoſities, conceived himſelf to be injured by every injury done to any of his people; and, beſides the compenſation to the perſon who ſuffered, or to his family, he thought himſelf entitled to exact a fine called the Fridwit, as an atonement for the breach of peace, and as a reward for the pains which he had taken in accommodating the quarrel. When this idea, which is ſo natural, was once ſuggeſted, it was willingly received both by ſovereign and people. The numerous fines which were levied augmented the revenue of the king: and the people were ſenſible that he would be more vigilant in interpoſing with his good offices when he reaped ſuch immediate advantage from them; and that injuries would be leſs frequent when, beſides compenſation to the perſon injured, they were expoſed to this additional penalty.[u]

This ſhort abſtract contains the hiſtory of the criminal juriſprudence of the northern nations for ſeveral centuries. The ſtate of England in this particular, during the period of the Anglo Saxons, may be judged of by the collection of ancient laws publiſhed by Lambard and Wilkins. The chief purport of theſe laws

is not to prevent or entirely ſuppreſs private quarrels, which the legiſlator knew to be impoſſible, but only to regulate and moderate them. The laws of Alfred enjoin that if any one know that his enemy or aggreſſor, after doing him an injury, reſolves to keep within his own houſe, and his own lands, he ſhall not fight him till he require compenſation for the injury. If he be ſtrong enough to beſiege him in his houſe, he may do it for ſeven days without attacking him; and, if the aggreſſor be willing during that time to ſurrender himſelf and his arms, his adverſary may detain him thirty days; but is afterwards obliged to reſtore him ſafe to his kindred, and be content with the compenſation. If the criminal fly to the temple, that ſanctuary muſt not be violated. Where the aſſailant has not force ſufficient to beſiege the criminal in his houſe, he muſt apply to the alderman for aſſiſtance; and, if the alderman refuſe aid, the aſſailant muſt have recourſe to the king; and he is not allowed to aſſault the houſe till after this ſupreme magiſtrate has refuſed aſſiſtance. If any one meet with his enemy, and be ignorant that he was reſolved to keep within his own lands, he muſt, before he attack him, require him to ſurrender himſelf priſoner and deliver up his arms; in which caſe he may detain him thirty days: but, if he refuſe to deliver up his arms, it is then lawful to fight him. A ſlave may fight in his maſter's quarrel; a father may fight in his ſon's with any one, except with his maſter.[x]

It was enacted by king Ina that no man ſhould take revenge for an injury till he had firſt demanded compenſation, and had been refuſed it.[y]

King Edmond, in the preamble to his laws, mentions the general miſery occaſioned by the multiplicity of private feuds and battles; and he eſtabliſhes ſeveral expedients for remedying this grievance. He ordains that, if any one commit murder, he may, with the aſſiſtance of his kindred, pay within a twelvemonth the

fine of his crime; and, if they abandon him, he ſhall alone ſuſtain the deadly feud or quarrel with the kindred of the murdered perſon. His own kindred are free from the feud, but on condition that they neither converſe with the criminal, nor ſupply him with meat or other neceſſaries. If any of them, after renouncing him, receive him into their houſe, or give him aſſiſtance, they are finable to the king, and are involved in the feud. If the kindred of the murdered perſon take revenge on any but the criminal himſelf, after he is abandoned by his kindred, all their property is forfeited, and they are declared to be enemies to the king and all his friends.[z] It is alſo ordained that the fine for murder ſhall never be remitted by the king;[a] and that no criminal ſhall be killed who flies to the church, or any of the king's towns;[b] and the king himſelf declares that his houſe ſhall give no protection to murderers, till they have ſatisfied the church by their penance, and the kindred of the deceaſed by making compenſation.[c] The method appointed for tranſacting this compoſition is found in the ſame law.[d]

Theſe attempts of Edmond to contract and diminiſh the feuds were contrary to the ancient ſpirit of the northern barbarians, and were a ſtep towards a more regular adminiſtration of juſtice. By the Salic law any man might, by a public declaration, exempt himſelf from his family quarrels: but then he was conſidered by the law as no longer belonging to the family; and he was deprived of all right of ſucceſſion, as the puniſhment of his cowardice.[e]

The price of the king's head, or his weregild, as it was then called, was by law thirty thouſand thriſmas, near thirteen hundred pounds of preſent money. The price of the prince's head was fifteen thouſand thriſmas; that of a biſhop's or alderman's eight thouſand; a ſheriff's four thouſand; a thane's or clergyman's two thouſand; a ceorle's two hundred and ſixty-ſix. Theſe

prices were fixed by the laws of the Angles. By the Mercian law the price of a ceorle's head was two hundred ſhillings; that of a thane's ſix times as much; that of a king's ſix times [f] more. By the laws of Kent the price of the archbiſhop's head was higher than that of the king's;[g] ſuch reſpect was then paid to the eccleſiaſtics. It muſt be underſtood that, where a perſon was unable or unwilling to pay the fine, he was put out of the protection of law, and the kindred of the deceaſed had liberty to puniſh him as they thought proper.

Some antiquarians [h] have thought that theſe compenſations were only given for manſlaughter, not for wilful murder: but no ſuch diſtinction appears in the laws; and it is contradicted by the practice of all the other barbarous nations,[i] by that of the ancient Germans,[k] and by that curious monument above mentioned of Saxon antiquity, preſerved by Hickes. There is indeed a law of Alfred's, which makes wilful murder capital;[l] but this ſeems only to have been an attempt of that great legiſlator towards eſtabliſhing a better police in the kingdom, and it probably remained without execution. By the laws of the ſame prince a conſpiracy againſt the life of the king might be redeemed by a fine.[m]

The price of all kinds of wounds was likewiſe fixed by the Saxon laws: a wound of an inch long under the hair was paid with one ſhilling; one of a like ſize in the face two ſhillings; thirty ſhillings for the loſs of an ear, and ſo forth.[n] There ſeems not to have been any difference made according to the dignity of the perſon. By the law of Ethelbert any one who committed adultery with his neighbour's wife was obliged to pay him a fine, and buy him another wife.[o]

Theſe inſtitutions are not peculiar to the ancient Germans. They ſeem to be the neceſſary progreſs of criminal juriſprudence among every free people, where the will of the ſovereign is not

implicitly obeyed. We find them among the ancient Greeks during the time of the Trojan war. Compoſitions for murder are mentioned in Neſtor's ſpeech to Achilles in the ninth Iliad, and are called 'apoinan.' The Iriſh, who never had any connections with the German nations, adopted the ſame practice till very lately; and the price of a man's head was called among them his eric; as we learn from Sir John Davis. The ſame cuſtom ſeems alſo to have prevailed among the Jews.[p]

Theft and robbery were frequent among the Anglo Saxons. In order to impoſe ſome check upon theſe crimes, it was ordained that no man ſhould ſell or buy any thing above twenty pence value, except in open market;[q] and every bargain of ſale muſt be executed before witneſſes.[r] Gangs of robbers much diſturbed the peace of the country; and the law determined that a tribe of banditti, conſiſting of between ſeven and thirty-five perſons, was to be called a turma, or troop: any greater company was denominated an army.[s] The puniſhments for this crime were various, but none of them capital.[t] If any man could track his ſtolen cattle into another's ground, the latter was obliged to ſhew the tracks out of it, or pay their value.[u]

Rebellion, to whatever exceſs it was carried, was not capital, but might be redeemed by a ſum of money.[x] The legiſlators, knowing it impoſſible to prevent all diſorders, only impoſed a higher fine on breaches of the peace committed in the king's court, or before an alderman or biſhop. An alehouſe, too, ſeems to have been conſidered as a privileged place; and any quarrels that aroſe there were more ſeverely puniſhed than elſewhere.[y]

RULES OF PROOF.

If the manner of puniſhing crimes among the Anglo Saxons appear ſingular, the proofs were not leſs ſo; and were alſo the

natural reſult of the ſituation of thoſe people. Whatever we may imagine concerning the uſual truth and ſincerity of men who live in a rude and barbarous ſtate, there is much more falſehood, and even perjury, among them than among civilized nations. Virtue, which is nothing but a more enlarged and more cultivated reaſon, never flouriſhes to any degree, nor is founded on ſteady principles of honour, except where a good education becomes general; and where men are taught the pernicious conſequences of vice, treachery, and immorality. Even ſuperſtition, though more prevalent among ignorant nations, is but a poor ſupply for the defects in knowledge and education. Our European anceſtors, who employed every moment the expedient of ſwearing on extraordinary croſſes and reliques, were leſs honourable in all engagements than their poſterity, who, from experience, have omitted thoſe ineffectual ſecurities. This general proneneſs to perjury was much increaſed by the uſual want of diſcernment in judges, who could not diſcuſs an intricate evidence, and were obliged to number, not weigh, the teſtimony of the witneſſes.[z] Hence the ridiculous practice of obliging men to bring compurgators, who, as they did not pretend to know any thing of the fact, expreſſed upon oath that they believed the perſon ſpoke true; and theſe compurgators were in ſome caſes multiplied to the number of three hundred.[a] The practice alſo of ſingle combat was employed by moſt nations on the continent as a remedy againſt falſe evidence;[b] and, though it was frequently dropped from the oppoſition of the clergy, it was continually revived from experience of the falſehood attending the teſtimony of witneſſes.[c] It became at laſt a ſpecies of juriſprudence. The caſes were determined by law, in which the party might challenge his adverſary, or the witneſſes, or the judge himſelf.[d] And, though theſe cuſtoms were abſurd, they were rather an improvement on the methods of trial which had

formerly been practiſed among thoſe barbarous nations, and which ſtill prevailed among the Anglo Saxons.

When any controverſy about a fact became too intricate for thoſe ignorant judges to unravel, they had recourſe to what they called the judgment of God; that is, to fortune. Their methods of conſulting this oracle were various. One of them was the deciſion by the croſs; it was practiſed in this manner. When a perſon was accuſed of any crime, he firſt cleared himſelf by oath, and he was attended by eleven compurgators. He next took two pieces of wood, one of which was marked with the ſign of the croſs, and, wrapping both up in wool, he placed them on the altar, or on ſome celebrated relique. After ſolemn prayers for the ſucceſs of the experiment, a prieſt, or, in his ſtead, ſome unexperienced youth, took up one of the pieces of wood, and, if he happened upon that which was marked with the figure of a croſs, the perſon was pronounced innocent; if otherwiſe, guilty.[e] This practice, as it aroſe from ſuperſtition, was aboliſhed by it in France. The emperor Lewis the Debonnaire prohibited that method of trial, not becauſe it was uncertain, but leſt that ſacred figure, ſays he, of the croſs ſhould be proſtituted in common diſputes and controverſies.[f]

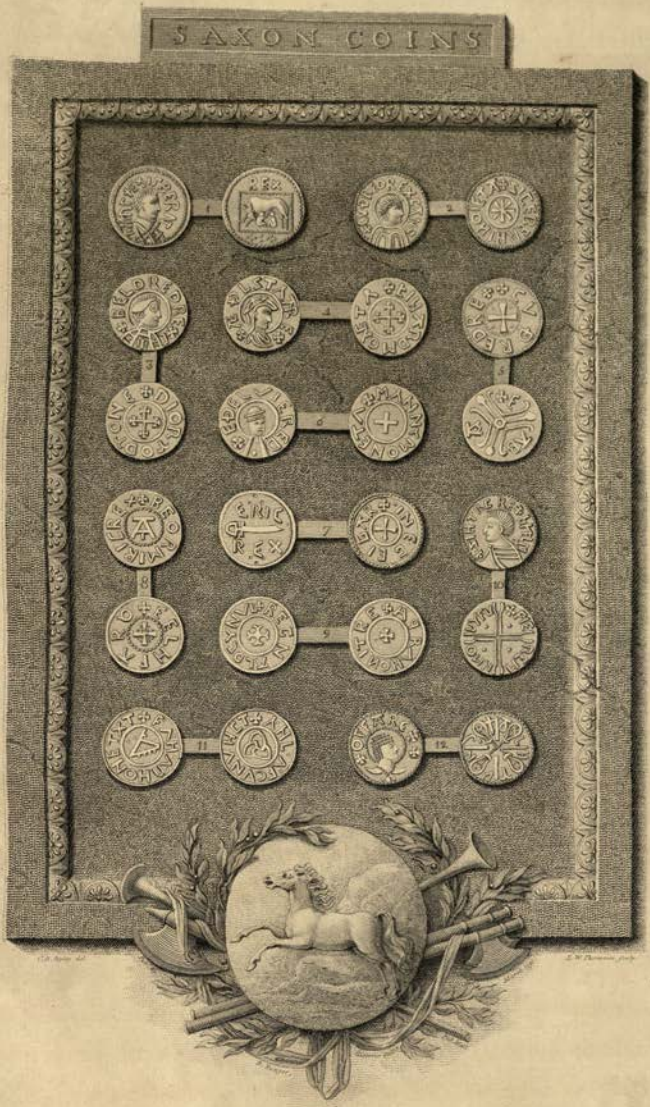
The ordeal was another eſtabliſhed method of trial among the Anglo Saxons. It was practiſed either by boiling water or red-hot iron. The former was appropriated to the common people, the latter to the nobility. The water or iron was conſecrated by many prayers, maſſes, faſtings, and exorciſms;[g] after which the perſon accuſed either took up a ſtone ſunk in the water[h] to a certain depth, or carried the iron to a certain diſtance; and, his hand being wrapped up, and the covering ſealed for three days, if there appeared, on examining it, no marks of burning, he was pronounced innocent; if otherwiſe, guilty.[i] The trial by cold water was different. The perſon was thrown into conſe-

crated water; if he ſwam, he was guilty; if he ſunk, innocent.[k] It is difficult for us to conceive how any innocent perſon could ever eſcape by the one trial, or any criminal be convicted by the other. But there was another uſage, admirably calculated for allowing every criminal to eſcape who had confidence enough to try it. A conſecrated cake, called a corſned, was produced; which if the perſon could ſwallow and digeſt he was pronounced innocent.[l]

MILITARY FORCE.

THE feudal law, if it had place at all among the Anglo Saxons, which is doubtful, was not certainly extended over all the landed property, and was not attended with thoſe conſequences of homage, reliefs,[m] worſhip, marriage, and other burdens, which were inſeparable from it in the kingdoms of the continent. As the Saxons expelled, or almoſt entirely deſtroyed, the ancient Britons, they planted themſelves in this iſland on the ſame footing with their anceſtors in Germany, and found no occaſion for the feudal inſtitutions;[n] which were calculated to maintain a kind of ſtanding army, always in readineſs to ſuppreſs any inſurrection among the conquered people. The trouble and expenſe of defending the ſtate in England lay equally upon all the land; and it was uſual for every five hides to equip a man for the ſervice. The trinoda neceſſitas, as it was called, or the burden of military expeditions, of repairing highways, and of building and ſupporting bridges, was inſeparable from landed property, even though it belonged to the church or monaſteries, unleſs exempted by a particular charter.[o] The ceorles or huſbandmen were provided with arms, and were obliged to take their turn in military duty.[p] There were computed to be two hundred and forty-three thouſand ſix hundred hides in England;[q] conſe-

SAXON COINS



quently the ordinary military force of the kingdom conſiſted of forty-eight thouſand ſeven hundred and twenty men; though, no doubt, on extraordinary occaſions, a greater number might be aſſembled. The king and nobility had ſome military tenants, who were called Sithcun-men.[r] And there were ſome lands annexed to the office of aldermen, and to other offices; but theſe probably were not of great extent, and were poſſeſſed only during pleaſure, as in the commencement of the feudal law in other countries of Europe.

PUBLIC REVENUE.

THE revenue of the king ſeems to have conſiſted chiefly in his demeſnes, which were large; and in the tolls and impoſts which he probably levied at diſcretion on the boroughs and ſea ports that lay within his demeſnes. He could not alienate any part of the crown lands, even to religious uſes, without the conſent of the ſtates.[s] Danegelt was a land tax of a ſhilling a hide, impoſed by the ſtates,[t] either for payment of the ſums exacted by the Danes, or for putting the kingdom in a poſture of defence againſt thoſe invaders.[u]

VALUE OF MONEY.

THE Saxon pound, as likewiſe that which was coined for ſome centuries after the conqueſt, was near three times the weight of our preſent money. There were forty-eight ſhillings in the pound, and five pence in a ſhilling;[x] conſequently a Saxon ſhilling was near a fifth heavier than ours, and a Saxon penny near three times as heavy.[y] As to the value of money in thoſe times, compared to commodities, there are ſome, though not very certain, means of computation. A ſheep, by the laws of Athelſtan,

was eſtimated at a ſhilling; that is, fifteen pence of our money. The fleece was two fifths of the value of the whole [a] ſheep; much above its preſent eſtimation; and the reaſon probably was, that the Saxons, like the ancients, were little acquainted with any clothing but what was made of wool. Silk and cotton were quite unknown; linen was not much uſed. An ox was computed at ſix times the value of a ſheep; a cow at four.[a] If we ſuppoſe that the cattle in that age, from the defects in huſbandry, were not ſo large as they are at preſent in England, we may compute that money was then near ten times of greater value. A horſe was valued at about thirty-ſix ſhillings of our money, or thirty Saxon ſhillings;[b] a mare a third leſs; a man at three pounds.[c] The board wages of a child the firſt year was eight ſhillings, together with a cow's paſture in ſummer and an ox's in winter.[d] William of Malmeſbury mentions it as a remarkably high price that William Rufus gave fifteen marks for a horſe, or about thirty pounds of our preſent money.[e] Between the years 900 and 1000 Ednoth bought a hide of land for about one hundred and eighteen ſhillings of preſent [f] money. This was little more than a ſhilling an acre; which indeed appears to have been the uſual price, as we may learn from other accounts.[g] A palfrey was ſold for twelve ſhillings about the year 966.[h] The value of an ox in king Ethelred's time was between ſeven and eight ſhillings; a cow about ſix ſhillings.[i] Gervas of Tilbury ſays that in Henry I.'s time bread, which would ſuffice a hundred men for a day, was rated at three ſhillings, or a ſhilling of that age; for it is thought that, ſoon after the conqueſt, a pound ſterling was divided into twenty ſhillings. A ſheep was rated at a ſhilling, and ſo of other things in proportion. In Athelſtan's time a ram was valued at a ſhilling, or four pence Saxon.[k] The tenants of Shireburn were obliged, at their choice, to pay either ſix pence or four hens.[l] About 1232 the abbot of

St. Albans, going on a journey, hired ſeven handſome ſtout horſes; and agreed, if any of them died on the road, to pay the owner thirty ſhillings a-piece of our preſent money.[m] It is to be remarked that in all ancient times the raiſing of corn, eſpecially wheat, being a ſpecies of manufactory, that commodity always bore a higher price, compared to cattle, than it does in our times.[n] The Saxon Chronicle tells us[o] that in the reign of Edward the Confeſſor there was the moſt terrible famine ever known; inſomuch that a quarter of wheat roſe to ſixty pennies, or fifteen ſhillings of our preſent money: conſequently it was as dear as if it now coſt ſeven pounds ten ſhillings. This much exceeds the great famine in the end of queen Elizabeth; when a quarter of wheat was ſold for four pounds. Money in this laſt period was nearly of the ſame value as in our time. Theſe ſevere famines are a certain proof of bad huſbandry.

On the whole, there are three things to be conſidered whereever a ſum of money is mentioned in ancient times: firſt, the change of denomination, by which a pound has been reduced to the third part of its ancient weight in ſilver; ſecondly, the change in value by the greater plenty of money, which has reduced the ſame weight of ſilver to ten times leſs value, compared to commodities, and conſequently a pound ſterling to the thirtieth part of the ancient value; thirdly, the fewer people and leſs induſtry which were then to be found in every European kingdom. This circumſtance made even the thirtieth part of the ſum more difficult to levy, and cauſed any ſum to have more than thirty times greater weight and influence, both abroad and at home, than in our times; in the ſame manner that a ſum (a hundred thouſand pounds, for inſtance) is at preſent more difficult to levy in a ſmall ſtate, ſuch as Bavaria, and can produce greater effects on ſuch a ſmall community, than

on England. This laſt difference is not eaſy to be calculated; but, allowing that England has now ſix times more induſtry, and three times more people, than it had at the conqueſt, and for ſome reigns after that period, we are upon that ſuppoſition to conceive, taking all circumſtances together, every ſum of money mentioned by hiſtorians as if it were multiplied more than a hundred fold above a ſum of the ſame denomination at preſent.

In the Saxon times land was divided equally among all the male children of the deceaſed, according to the cuſtom of Gavelkind. The practice of entails is to be found in thoſe [p] times. Land was chiefly of two kinds; bockland, or land held by book or charter, which was regarded as full property, and deſcended to the heirs of the poſſeſſor; and folkland, or the land held by the ceorles and common people, who were removable at pleaſure, and were indeed only tenants during the will of their lords.

The firſt attempt, which we find in England, to ſeparate the eccleſiaſtical from the civil juriſdiction, was that law of Edgar, by which all diſputes among the clergy were ordered to be carried before the biſhop.[q] The penances were then very ſevere; but, as a man could buy them off with money, or might ſubſtitute others to perform them, they lay eaſy upon the rich.[r]

MANNERS.

With regard to the manners of the Anglo Saxons we can ſay little, but that they were in general a rude uncultivated people, ignorant of letters, unſkilled in the mechanical arts, untamed to ſubmiſſion under law and government, addicted to intemperance, riot, and diſorder. Their beſt quality was their military courage, which yet was not ſupported by diſcipline or conduct.

Their want of fidelity to the prince, or to any truſt repoſed in them, appears ſtrongly in the hiſtory of their later period; and their want of humanity in all their hiſtory. Even the Norman hiſtorians, notwithſtanding the low ſtate of the arts in their own country, ſpeak of them as barbarians, when they mention the invaſion made upon them by the duke of Normandy.[s] The conqueſt put the people in a ſituation of receiving ſlowly from abroad the rudiments of ſcience and cultivation, and of correcting their rough and licentious manners.

Lawrence sc. Engr. to the King
P.J. de Loutherbourg del.
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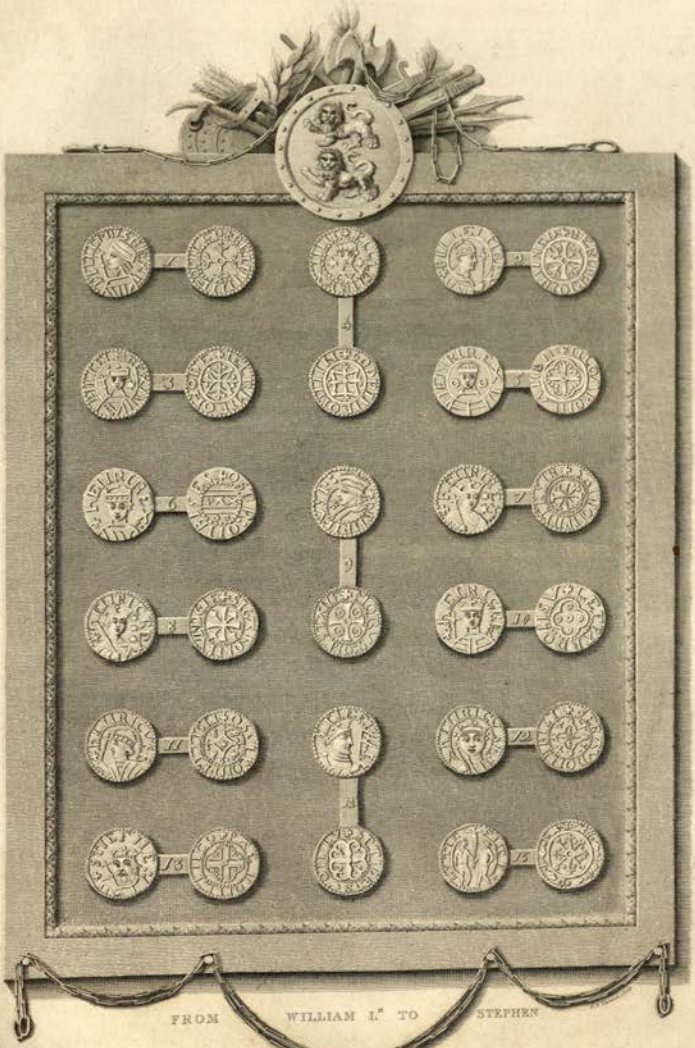
FROM WILLIAM I.st TO STEPHEN

J. Fittler Sculpsit.

WILLIAM THE FIRST.

Published as the Act directs, by T. Bensley, at the Historic Gallery, June 1st.

CHAP. IV.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS: SUBMISSION OF THE ENGLISH: SETTLEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT: KING'S RETURN TO NORMANDY: DISCONTENTS OF THE ENGLISH: THEIR INSURRECTIONS: RIGOURS OF THE NORMAN GOVERNMENT: INTRODUCTION OF THE FEUDAL LAW: INNOVATION IN ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT: INSURRECTION OF THE NORMAN BARONS: REVOLT OF PRINCE ROBERT: DOOMSDAY BOOK: THE NEW FOREST: WAR WITH FRANCE: DEATH — & CHARACTER OF WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

H. Fuseli, R. Ad. Published as the Act directs, by R. Bowyer at the Historic Gallery June 1790. J. Fittler fculp.

CHAPTER IV.

WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.

1066....1087.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS....SETTLEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT....KING'S RETURN TO NORMANDY....INSURRECTIONS OF THE ENGLISH....RIGOURS OF THE NORMAN GOVERNMENT....NEW INSURRECTIONS AND RIGOURS....INTRODUCTION OF THE FEUDAL LAW....INNOVATION IN ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT....INSURRECTION OF THE NORMAN BARONS....DISPUTE ABOUT INVESTITURES....REVOLT OF PRINCE ROBERT ....DOMESDAY BOOK....THE NEW FOREST....WAR WITH FRANCE....DEATH AND CHARACTER OF WILLIAM.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

NOTHING could exceed the conſternation which ſeized the Engliſh when they received intelligence of the unfortunate battle of Haſtings, the death of their king, the ſlaughter of their principal nobility and of their braveſt warriors, and the rout and diſperſion of the remainder. But, though the loſs which they had ſuſtained in that fatal action was conſiderable, it might have been repaired by a great nation; where the people were gene-

rally armed, and where there reſided ſo many powerful noblemen in every province, who could have aſſembled their retainers, and have obliged the duke of Normandy to divide his army, and probably to waſte it in a variety of actions and rencounters. It was thus that the kingdom had formerly reſiſted, for many years, its invaders, and had been gradually ſubdued by the continued efforts of the Romans, Saxons, and Danes; and equal difficulties might have been apprehended by William in this bold and hazardous enterpriſe. But there were ſeveral vices in the Anglo Saxon conſtitution, which rendered it difficult for the Engliſh to defend their liberties in ſo critical an emergency. The people had in a great meaſure loſt all national pride and ſpirit, by their recent and long ſubjection to the Danes; and, as Canute had, in the courſe of his adminiſtration, much abated the rigours of conqueſt, and had governed them equitably by their own laws, they regarded with the leſs terror the ignominy of a foreign yoke, and deemed the inconveniencies of ſubmiſſion leſs formidable than thoſe of bloodſhed, war, and reſiſtance. Their attachment alſo to the ancient royal family had been much weakened, by their habits of ſubmiſſion to the Daniſh princes, and by their late election of Harold, or their acquieſcence in his uſurpation. And, as they had long been accuſtomed to regard Edgar Atheling, the only heir of the Saxon line, as unfit to govern them even in times of order and tranquillity, they could entertain ſmall hopes of his being able to repair ſuch great loſſes as they had ſuſtained, or to withſtand the victorious arms of the duke of Normandy.

That they might not, however, be altogether wanting to themſelves in this extreme neceſſity, the Engliſh took ſome ſteps towards adjuſting their disjointed government, and uniting themſelves againſt the common enemy. The two potent earls, Edwin and Morcar, who had fled to London with the remains of

the broken army, took the lead on this occaſion. In concert with Stigand, archbiſhop of Canterbury, a man poſſeſſed of great authority and of ample revenues, they proclaimed Edgar, and endeavoured to put the people in a poſture of defence, and encourage them to reſiſt the Normans.[t] But the terror of the late defeat, and the near neighbourhood of the invaders, increaſed the confuſion inſeparable from great revolutions; and every reſolution propoſed was haſty, fluctuating, tumultuary, diſconcerted by fear or faction, ill planned, and worſe executed.

William, that his enemies might have no leiſure to recover from their conſternation, or unite their counſels, immediately put himſelf in motion after his victory, and reſolved to proſecute an enterpriſe, which nothing but celerity and vigour could render finally ſucceſsful. His firſt attempt was againſt Romney, whoſe inhabitants he ſeverely puniſhed, on account of their cruel treatment of ſome Norman ſeamen and ſoldiers, who had been carried thither by ſtreſs of weather, or by a miſtake in their courſe.[u] And, foreſeeing that his conqueſt of England might ſtill be attended with many difficulties and with much oppoſition, he deemed it neceſſary, before he ſhould advance farther into the country, to make himſelf maſter of Dover; which would both ſecure him a retreat in caſe of adverſe fortune, and afford him a ſafe landing place for ſuch ſupplies as might be requiſite for puſhing his advantages. The terror diffuſed by his victory at Haſtings was ſo great, that the garriſon of Dover, though numerous and well provided, immediately capitulated; and, as the Normans, ruſhing in to take poſſeſſion of the town, haſtily ſet fire to ſome of the houſes, William, deſirous to conciliate the minds of the Engliſh by an appearance of lenity and juſtice, made compenſation to the inhabitants for their loſſes.[x]

The Norman army, being much diſtreſſed with a dyſentery, was obliged to remain here eight days; but the duke, on their

recovery, advanced with quick marches towards London, and by his approach increaſed the confuſions which were already ſo prevalent in the Engliſh counſels: The eccleſiaſtics in particular, whoſe influence was great over the people, began to declare in his favour; and, as moſt of the biſhops and dignified clergymen were even then Frenchmen or Normans, the pope's bull, by which his enterpriſe was avowed and hallowed, was now openly inſiſted on as a reaſon for general ſubmiſſion. The ſuperior learning of thoſe prelates, which during the Confeſſor's reign had raiſed them above the ignorant Saxons, made their opinions be received with implicit faith; and a young prince like Edgar, whoſe capacity was deemed ſo mean, was but ill qualified to reſiſt the impreſſion which they made on the minds of the people. A repulſe, which a body of Londoners received from five hundred Norman horſe, renewed in the city the terror of the great defeat at Haſtings; the eaſy ſubmiſſion of all the inhabitants of Kent was an additional diſcouragement to them; the burning of Southwark before their eyes made them dread a like fate to their own city; and no man any longer entertained thoughts but of immediate ſafety and of ſelf-preſervation. Even the earls Edwin and Morcar, in deſpair of making effectual reſiſtance, retired with their troops to their own provinces; and the people thenceforth diſpoſed themſelves unanimouſly to yield to the victor. As ſoon as he paſſed the Thames at Wallingford, and reached Berkhamſtead, Stigand the primate made ſubmiſſions to him. Before he came within ſight of the city all the chief nobility, and Edgar Atheling himſelf, the new elected king, came into his camp, and declared their intention of yielding to his authority.[y] They requeſted him to mount their throne, which they now conſidered as vacant; and declared to him that, as they had always been ruled by regal power, they deſired to follow, in this particular, the example of their anceſtors, and knew

WILLIAM I. RECEIVING THE CROWN OF ENGLAND.

of no one more worthy than himſelf to hold the reins of government.[z]

Though this was the great object to which the duke's enterpriſe tended, he feigned to deliberate on the offer; and, being deſirous at firſt of preſerving the appearance of a legal adminiſtration, he wiſhed to obtain a more explicit and formal conſent of the Engliſh nation.[a] But Aimar of Aquitain, a man equally reſpected for valour in the field and for prudence in council, remonſtrating with him on the danger of delay in ſo critical a conjuncture, he laid aſide all farther ſcruples, and accepted of the crown which was tendered him. Orders were immediately iſſued to prepare every thing for the ceremony of his coronation on the twenty-ſixth of December following; but, as he was yet afraid to place entire confidence in the Londoners, who were numerous and warlike, he meanwhile commanded fortreſſes to be erected, in order to curb the inhabitants, and to ſecure his perſon and government.[b]

Stigand was not much in the duke's favour; both becauſe he had intruded into the ſee on the expulſion of Robert the Norman, and becauſe he poſſeſſed ſuch influence and authority over the Engliſh[c] as might be dangerous to a new eſtabliſhed monarch. William, therefore, pretending that the primate had obtained his pall in an irregular manner from pope Benedict IX. who was himſelf an uſurper, refuſed to be conſecrated by him; and conferred this honour on Aldred, archbiſhop of York. Weſtminſter abbey was the place appointed for that magnificent ceremony. The moſt conſiderable of the nobility, both Engliſh and Norman, attended the duke on this occaſion. Aldred, in a ſhort ſpeech, aſked the former whether they agreed to accept of William as their king; the biſhop of Coutance put the ſame queſtion to the latter; and, both being anſwered with acclamations,[d] Aldred adminiſtered to the duke the uſual coronation oath; by

which he bound himſelf to protect the church, to adminiſter juſtice, and to repreſs violence: he then anointed him, and put the crown upon his head.[e] There appeared nothing but joy in the countenance of the ſpectators: but in that very moment there burſt forth the ſtrongeſt ſymptoms of the jealouſy and animoſity which prevailed between the nations, and which continually increaſed during the reign of this prince. The Norman ſoldiers, who were placed without, in order to guard the church, hearing the ſhouts within, fancied that the Engliſh were offering violence to their duke; and they immediately aſſaulted the populace, and ſet fire to the neighbouring houſes. The alarm was conveyed to the nobility who ſurrounded the prince: both Engliſh and Normans, full of apprehenſions, ruſhed out to ſecure themſelves from the preſent danger; and it was with difficulty that William himſelf was able to appeaſe the tumult.[f]

SETTLEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT. 1067.

THE king, thus poſſeſſed of the throne by a pretended deſtination of king Edward, and by an irregular election of the people, but ſtill more by force of arms, retired from London to Berking in Eſſex; and there received the ſubmiſſions of all the nobility who had not attended his coronation. Edric, ſurnamed the Foreſter, grand-nephew to that Edric ſo noted for his repeated acts of perfidy during the reigns of Ethelred and Edmond; earl Coxo, a man famous for bravery; even Edwin and Morcar, earls of Mercia and Northumberland; with the other principal noblemen of England; came and ſwore fealty to him; were received into favour, and were confirmed in the poſſeſſion of their eſtates and dignities.[g] Every thing bore the appearance of peace and tranquillity; and William had no other occupation than to give contentment to the foreigners, who had aſſiſted him to mount

the throne, and to his new ſubjects, who had ſo readily ſubmitted to him.

He had got poſſeſſion of the treaſure of Harold, which was conſiderable: and, being alſo ſupplied with rich preſents from the opulent men in all parts of England, who were ſolicitous to gain the favour of their new ſovereign, he diſtributed great ſums among his troops; and by this liberality gave them hopes of obtaining at length thoſe more durable eſtabliſhments which they had expected from his enterpriſe.[h] The eccleſiaſtics, both at home and abroad, had much forwarded his ſucceſs; and he failed not, in return, to expreſs his gratitude and devotion in the manner which was moſt acceptable to them. He ſent Harold's ſtandard to the pope, accompanied with many valuable preſents. All the conſiderable monaſteries and churches in France, where prayers had been put up for his ſucceſs, now taſted of his bounty.[i] The Engliſh monks found him well diſpoſed to favour their order: and he built a new convent near Haſtings, which he called Battle Abbey; and which, on pretence of ſupporting monks to pray for his own ſoul and for that of Harold, ſerved as a laſting memorial of his victory.[k]

He introduced into England that ſtrict execution of juſtice for which his adminiſtration had been much celebrated in Normandy; and even during this violent revolution every diſorder or oppreſſion met with rigorous puniſhment.[l] His army, in particular, was governed with ſevere diſcipline; and, notwithſtanding the inſolence of victory, care was taken to give as little offence as poſſible to the jealouſy of the vanquiſhed. The king appeared ſolicitous to unite, in an amicable manner, the Normans and the Engliſh, by intermarriages and alliances; and all his new ſubjects who approached his perſon were received with affability and regard. No ſigns of ſuſpicion appeared, not even towards Edgar Atheling, the heir of the ancient royal family;

whom William confirmed in the honours of earl of Oxford, conferred on him by Harold, and whom he affected to treat with the higheſt kindneſs, as nephew to the Confeſſor, his great friend and benefactor. Though he confiſcated the eſtates of Harold, and of thoſe who had fought in the battle of Haſtings on the ſide of that prince, whom he repreſented as an uſurper, he ſeemed willing to admit of every plauſible excuſe for paſt oppoſition to his pretenſions, and he received many into favour who had carried arms againſt him. He confirmed the liberties and immunities of London and the other cities of England; and appeared deſirous of replacing every thing on ancient eſtabliſhments. In his whole adminiſtration he bore the ſemblance of the lawful prince, not of the conqueror: and the Engliſh began to flatter themſelves that they had changed, not the form of their government, but the ſucceſſion only of their ſovereigns; a matter which gave them ſmall concern. The better to reconcile his new ſubjects to his authority, William made a progreſs through ſome parts of England; and, beſides a ſplendid court and majeſtic preſence, which overawed the people, already ſtruck with his military fame, the appearance of his clemency and juſtice gained the approbation of the wiſe, attentive to the firſt ſteps of their new ſovereign.

But, amidſt this confidence and friendſhip which he expreſſed for the Engliſh, the king took care to place all real power in the hands of his Normans, and ſtill to keep poſſeſſion of the ſword, to which he was ſenſible he had owed his advancement to ſovereign authority. He diſarmed the city of London and other places, which appeared moſt warlike and populous; and, building citadels in that capital, as well as in Wincheſter, Hereford, and the cities beſt ſituated for commanding the kingdom, he quartered Norman ſoldiers in all of them, and left no where any power able to reſiſt or oppoſe him. He beſtowed the for-

feited eſtates on the moſt eminent of his captains, and eſtabliſhed funds for the payment of his ſoldiers. And thus, while his civil adminiſtration carried the face of a legal magiſtrate, his military inſtitutions were thoſe of a maſter and tyrant; at leaſt of one who reſerved to himſelf, whenever he pleaſed, the power of aſſuming that character.

KING'S RETURN TO NORMANDY.

By this mixture, however, of vigour and lenity, he had ſo ſoothed the minds of the Engliſh, that he thought he might ſafely reviſit his native country, and enjoy the triumph and congratulation of his ancient ſubjects. He left the adminiſtration in the hands of his uterine brother Odo, biſhop of Baieux, and of William Fitz Oſberne. That their authority might be expoſed to leſs danger, he carried over with him all the moſt conſiderable nobility of England; who, while they ſerved to grace his court by their preſence and magnificent retinues, were in reality hoſtages for the fidelity of the nation. Among theſe were Edgar Atheling, Stigand the primate, the earls Edwin and Morcar, Waltheof, the ſon of the brave earl Siward, with others, eminent for the greatneſs of their fortunes and families, or for their eccleſiaſtical and civil dignities. He was viſited at the abbey of Feſcamp, where he reſided during ſome time, by Rodulph, uncle to the king of France, and by many powerful princes and nobles; who, having contributed to his enterpriſe, were deſirous of participating in the joy and advantages of its ſucceſs. His Engliſh courtiers, willing to ingratiate themſelves with their new ſovereign, outvied each other in equipages and entertainments; and made a diſplay of riches which ſtruck the foreigners with aſtoniſhment. William of Poictiers, a Norman hiſtorian,[m] who was preſent, ſpeaks with admiration of the beauty of their per-

ſons, the ſize and workmanſhip of their ſilver plate, the coſtlineſs of their embroideries, an art in which the Engliſh then excelled; and he expreſſes himſelf in ſuch terms as tend much to exalt our idea of the opulence and cultivation of the people.[n] But, though every thing bore the face of joy and feſtivity, and William himſelf treated his new courtiers with great appearance of kindneſs, it was impoſſible altogether to prevent the inſolence of the Normans; and the Engliſh nobles derived little ſatisfaction from thoſe entertainments, where they conſidered themſelves as led in triumph by their oſtentatious conqueror.

INSURRECTIONS OF THE ENGLISH.

In England affairs took ſtill a worſe turn during the abſence of the ſovereign. Diſcontents and complaints multiplied every where; ſecret conſpiracies were entered into againſt the government; hoſtilities were already begun in many places; and every thing ſeemed to menace a revolution as rapid as that which had placed William on the throne. The hiſtorian above mentioned, who is a panegyriſt of his maſter, throws the blame entirely on the fickle and mutinous diſpoſition of the Engliſh, and highly celebrates the juſtice and lenity of Odo's and Fitz Oſberne's adminiſtration.[o] But other hiſtorians, with more probability, impute the cauſe chiefly to the Normans, who, deſpiſing a people that had ſo eaſily ſubmitted to the yoke, envying their riches, and grudging the reſtraints impoſed upon their own rapine, were deſirous of provoking them to a rebellion; by which they expected to acquire new confiſcations and forfeitures, and to gratify thoſe unbounded hopes which they had formed in entering on this enterpriſe.[p]

It is evident that the chief reaſon of this alteration in the ſentiments of the Engliſh muſt be aſcribed to the departure of

William, who was alone able to curb the violence of his captains, and to overawe the mutinies of the people. Nothing indeed appears more ſtrange than that this prince, in leſs than three months after the conqueſt of a great, warlike, and turbulent nation, ſhould abſent himſelf, in order to reviſit his own country, which remained in profound tranquillity, and was not menaced by any of its neighbours; and ſhould ſo long leave his jealous ſubjects at the mercy of an inſolent and licentious army. Were we not aſſured of the ſolidity of his genius, and the good ſenſe diſplayed in all other circumſtances of his conduct, we might aſcribe this meaſure to a vain oſtentation, which rendered him impatient to diſplay his pomp and magnificence among his ancient ſubjects. It is, therefore, more natural to believe that in ſo extraordinary a ſtep he was guided by a concealed policy; and that, though he had thought proper at firſt to allure the people to ſubmiſſion by the ſemblance of a legal adminiſtration, he found that he could neither ſatisfy his rapacious captains, nor ſecure his unſtable government, without farther exerting the rights of conqueſt, and ſeizing the poſſeſſions of the Engliſh. In order to have a pretext for this violence, he endeavoured, without diſcovering his intentions, to provoke and allure them into inſurrections, which he thought could never prove dangerous while he detained all the principal nobility in Normandy, while a great and victorious army was quartered in England, and while he himſelf was ſo near to ſuppreſs any tumult or rebellion. But, as no ancient writer has aſcribed this tyrannical purpoſe to William, it ſcarcely ſeems allowable, from conjecture alone, to throw ſuch an imputation upon him.

But, whether we are to account for that meaſure from the king's vanity or from his policy, it was the immediate cauſe of all the calamities which the Engliſh endured during this and the ſubſequent reigns; and gave riſe to thoſe mutual jealouſies and

animoſities between them and the Normans, which were never appeaſed till a long tract of time had gradually united the two nations, and made them one people. The inhabitants of Kent, who had firſt ſubmitted to the Conqueror, were the firſt that attempted to throw off the yoke; and, in confederacy with Euſtace, count of Bologne, who had alſo been diſguſted by the Normans, they made an attempt, though without ſucceſs, on the garriſon of Dover.[q] Edric the Foreſter, whoſe poſſeſſions lay on the banks of the Severn, being provoked at the depredations of ſome Norman captains in his neighbourhood, formed an alliance with Blethyn and Rowallan, two Welſh princes; and endeavoured, with their aſſiſtance, to repel force by force.[r] But, though theſe open hoſtilities were not very conſiderable, the diſaffection was general among the Engliſh; who had become ſenſible, though too late, of their defenceleſs condition, and began already to experience thoſe inſults and injuries which a nation muſt always expect that allows itſelf to be reduced to that abject ſituation. A ſecret conſpiracy was entered into to perpetrate in one day a general maſſacre of the Normans, like that which had formerly been executed upon the Danes; and the quarrel was become ſo general and national that the vaſſals of earl Coxo, having deſired him to head them in an inſurrection, and finding him reſolute in maintaining his fidelity to William, put him to death as a traitor to his country.

The king, informed of theſe dangerous diſcontents, haſtened over to England; and, by his preſence, and the vigorous meaſures which he purſued, diſconcerted all the ſchemes of the conſpirators. Such of them as had been more violent in their mutiny betrayed their guilt by flying, or concealing themſelves; and the confiſcation of their eſtates, while it increaſed the number of malcontents, both enabled William to gratify farther the rapacity of his Norman captains, and gave them the proſpect of new

forfeitures and attainders. The king began to regard all his Engliſh ſubjects as inveterate and irreclaimable enemies; and thenceforth either embraced, or was more fully confirmed in, the reſolution of ſeizing their poſſeſſions, and of reducing them to the moſt abject ſlavery. Though the natural violence and ſeverity of his temper made him incapable of feeling any remorſe in the execution of this tyrannical purpoſe, he had art enough to conceal his intention, and to preſerve ſtill ſome appearance of juſtice in his oppreſſions. He ordered all the Engliſh, who had been arbitrarily expelled by the Normans during his abſence, to be reſtored to their eſtates:[s] but at the ſame time he impoſed a general tax on the people, that of Danegelt, which had been aboliſhed by the Confeſſor, and which had always been extremely odious to the nation.[t]

As the vigilance of William overawed the malcontents, their inſurrections were more the reſult of an impatient humour in the people than of any regular conſpiracy, which could give them a rational hope of ſucceſs againſt the eſtabliſhed power of the Normans. The inhabitants of Exeter, inſtigated by Githa, mother to king Harold, refuſed to admit a Norman garriſon; and, betaking themſelves to arms, were ſtrengthened by the acceſſion of the neighbouring inhabitants of Devonſhire and Cornwall.[u] The king haſtened with his forces to chaſtiſe this revolt; and on his approach the wiſer and more conſiderable citizens, ſenſible of the unequal conteſt, perſuaded the people to ſubmit, and to deliver hoſtages for their obedience. A ſudden mutiny of the populace broke this agreement; and William, appearing before the walls, ordered the eyes of one of the hoſtages to be put out, as an earneſt of that ſeverity which the rebels muſt expect if they perſevered in their revolt.[x] The inhabitants were anew ſeized with terror; and, ſurrendering at diſcretion, threw themſelves at the king's feet, and ſupplicated his clemency and

forgiveneſs. William was not deſtitute of generoſity when his temper was not hardened either by policy or paſſion. He was prevailed on to pardon the rebels, and he ſet guards on all the gates, in order to prevent the rapacity and inſolence of his ſoldiery.[y] Githa eſcaped with her treaſures to Flanders. The malcontents of Cornwall imitated the example of Exeter, and met with like treatment. And the king, having built a citadel in that city, which he put under the command of Baldwin, ſon of earl Gilbert, returned to Wincheſter, and diſperſed his army into their quarters. He was here joined by his wife Matilda, who had not before viſited England, and whom he now ordered to be crowned by archbiſhop Aldred. Soon after ſhe brought him an acceſſion to his family by the birth of a fourth ſon, whom he named Henry. His three elder ſons, Robert, Richard, and William, ſtill reſided in Normandy.

But, though the king appeared thus fortunate both in public and domeſtic life, the diſcontents of his Engliſh ſubjects augmented daily; and the injuries committed and ſuffered on both ſides rendered the quarrel between them and the Normans abſolutely incurable. The inſolence of victorious maſters, diſperſed throughout the kingdom, ſeemed intolerable to the natives; and, wherever they found the Normans ſeparate or aſſembled in ſmall bodies, they ſecretly ſet upon them, and gratified their vengeance by the ſlaughter of their enemies. But an inſurrection in the north drew thither the general attention, and ſeemed to threaten more important conſequences. Edwin and Morcar appeared at the head of this rebellion; and theſe potent noblemen, before they took arms, ſtipulated for foreign ſuccours from their nephew Blethyn prince of North Wales, from Malcolm king of Scotland, and from Sweyn king of Denmark. Beſides the general diſcontent which had ſeized the Engliſh, the two earls were incited to this revolt by private injuries. William, in

order to enſure them to his intereſts, had, on his acceſſion, promiſed his daughter in marriage to Edwin; but either he had never ſeriouſly intended to perform this engagement, or, having changed his plan of adminiſtration in England from clemency to rigour, he thought it was to little purpoſe if he gained one family, while he enraged the whole nation. When Edwin, therefore, renewed his applications, he gave him an abſolute [z] denial; and this diſappointment, added to ſo many other reaſons of diſguſt, induced that nobleman and his brother to concur with their incenſed countrymen, and to make one general effort for the recovery of their ancient liberties. William knew the importance of celerity in quelling an inſurrection ſupported by ſuch powerful leaders, and ſo agreeable to the wiſhes of the people; and, having his troops always in readineſs, he advanced by great journies to the north. On his march he gave orders to fortify the caſtle of Warwick, of which he left Henry de Beaumont governor, and that of Nottingham, which he committed to the cuſtody of William Peverell, another Norman captain.[a] He reached York before the rebels were in any condition for reſiſtance, or were joined by any of the foreign ſuccours which they expected, except a ſmall reinforcement from Wales;[b] and the two earls found no means of ſafety but having recourſe to the clemency of the victor. Archil, a potent nobleman in thoſe parts, imitated their example, and delivered his ſon as a hoſtage for his fidelity:[c] nor were the people, thus deſerted by their leaders, able to make any farther reſiſtance. But the treatment which William gave the chiefs was very different from that which fell to the ſhare of their followers. He obſerved religiouſly the terms which he had granted to the former, and allowed them for the preſent to keep poſſeſſion of their eſtates; but he extended the rigours of his confiſcations over the latter, and gave away their lands to his foreign adventurers. Theſe, planted throughout

the whole country, and in poſſeſſion of the military power, left Edwin and Morcar, whom he pretended to ſpare, deſtitute of all ſupport, and ready to fall whenever he ſhould think proper to command their ruin. A peace which he made with Malcolm, who did him homage for Cumberland, ſeemed at the ſame time to deprive them of all proſpect of foreign aſſiſtance.[d]

RIGOURS OF THE GOVERNMENT. 1068.

THE Engliſh were now ſenſible that their final deſtruction was intended; and that, inſtead of a ſovereign, whom they had hoped to gain by their ſubmiſſions, they had tamely ſurrendered themſelves, without reſiſtance, to a tyrant and a conqueror. Though the early confiſcation of Harold's followers might ſeem iniquitous; being inflicted on men who had never ſworn fealty to the duke of Normandy, who were ignorant of his pretenſions, and who only fought in defence of the government which they themſelves had eſtabliſhed in their own country; yet were theſe rigours, however contrary to the ancient Saxon laws, excuſed on account of the urgent neceſſities of the prince: and thoſe who were not involved in the preſent ruin hoped that they ſhould thenceforth enjoy, without moleſtation, their poſſeſſions and their dignities. But the ſucceſſive deſtruction of ſo many other families convinced them that the king intended to rely entirely on the ſupport and affections of foreigners; and they foreſaw new forfeitures, attainders, and acts of violence, as the neceſſary reſult of this deſtructive plan of adminiſtration. They obſerved that no Engliſhman poſſeſſed his confidence, or was intruſted with any command or authority; and that the ſtrangers, whom a rigorous diſcipline could have but ill reſtrained, were encouraged in their inſolence and tyranny againſt them. The eaſy ſubmiſſion of the kingdom on its firſt invaſion had expoſed the

natives to contempt; the ſubſequent proofs of their animoſity and reſentment had made them the object of hatred; and they were now deprived of every expedient by which they could hope to make themſelves either regarded or beloved by their ſovereign. Impreſſed with the ſenſe of this diſmal ſituation, many Engliſhmen fled into foreign countries, with an intention of paſſing their lives abroad free from oppreſſion, or of returning, on a favourable opportunity, to aſſiſt their friends in the recovery of their native liberties.[e] Edgar Atheling himſelf, dreading the inſidious careſſes of William, was perſuaded by Coſpatric, a powerful Northumbrian, to eſcape with him into Scotland; and he carried thither his two ſiſters Margaret and Chriſtina. They were well received by Malcolm, who ſoon after eſpouſed Margaret, the eldeſt ſiſter; and, partly with a view of ſtrengthening his kingdom by the acceſſion of ſo many ſtrangers, partly in hopes of employing them againſt the growing power of William, he gave great countenance to all the Engliſh exiles. Many of them ſettled there, and laid the foundation of families which afterwards made a figure in that country.

While the Engliſh ſuffered under theſe oppreſſions, even the foreigners were not much at their eaſe; but, finding themſelves ſurrounded on all hands by enraged enemies, who took every advantage againſt them, and menaced them with ſtill more bloody effects of the public reſentment, they began to wiſh again for the tranquillity and ſecurity of their native country. Hugh de Grentmeſnil and Humphry de Teliol, though intruſted with great commands, deſired to be diſmiſſed the ſervice; and ſome others imitated their example: a deſertion which was highly reſented by the king, and which he puniſhed by the confiſcation of all their poſſeſſions in England.[f] But William's bounty to his followers could not fail of alluring many new adventurers into his ſervice; and the rage of the vanquiſhed Engliſh ſerved only to

excite the attention of the king and thoſe warlike chiefs, and keep them in readineſs to ſuppreſs every commencement of domeſtic rebellion or foreign invaſion.

NEW INSURRECTIONS AND RIGOURS. 1069.

It was not long before they found occupation for their proweſs and military conduct. Godwin, Edmond, and Magnus, three ſons of Harold, had, immediately after the defeat at Haſtings, ſought a retreat in Ireland; where, having met with a kind reception from Dermot and other princes of that country, they projected an invaſion on England; and they hoped that all the exiles from Denmark, Scotland, and Wales, aſſiſted by forces from theſe ſeveral countries, would at once commence hoſtilities, and rouſe the indignation of the Engliſh againſt their haughty conquerors. They landed in Devonſhire; but found Brian, ſon of the count of Brittany, at the head of ſome foreign troops, ready to oppoſe them; and, being defeated in ſeveral actions, they were obliged to retreat to their ſhips, and to return with great loſs to Ireland.[g] The efforts of the Normans were now directed to the north, where affairs had fallen into the utmoſt confuſion. The more impatient of the Northumbrians had attacked Robert de Comyn, who was appointed governor of Durham; and, gaining the advantage over him from his negligence, they put him to death in that city, with ſeven hundred of his followers.[h] This ſucceſs animated the inhabitants of York; who, riſing in arms, ſlew Robert Fitz-Richard their governor,[i] and beſieged in the caſtle William Mallet, on whom the command now devolved. A little after, the Daniſh troops landed from three hundred veſſels. Oſberne, brother to king Sweyn, was intruſted with the command of theſe forces; and he was accompanied by Harold and Canute, two ſons of that monarch. Edgar Atheling

appeared from Scotland, and brought along with him Coſpatric, Waltheof, Siward, Bearne, Merleſwain, Adelin, and other leaders; who, partly from the hopes which they gave of Scottiſh ſuccours, partly from their authority in thoſe parts, eaſily perſuaded the warlike and diſcontented Northumbrians to join the inſurrection. Mallet, that he might better provide for the defence of the citadel of York, ſet fire to ſome houſes which lay contiguous: but this expedient proved the immediate cauſe of his deſtruction. The flames, ſpreading into the neighbouring ſtreets, reduced the whole city to aſhes. The enraged inhabitants, aided by the Danes, took advantage of the confuſion to attack the caſtle, which they carried by aſſault; and the garriſon, to the number of three thouſand men, was put to the ſword without mercy.[k]

This ſucceſs proved a ſignal to many other parts of England, and gave the people an opportunity of ſhewing their malevolence to the Normans. Hereward, a nobleman in Eaſt Anglia celebrated for valour, aſſembled his followers; and, taking ſhelter in the Iſle of Ely, made inroads on all the neighbouring country.[l] The Engliſh in the counties of Somerſet and Dorſet roſe in arms, and aſſaulted Montacute, the Norman governor; while the inhabitants of Cornwall and Devon inveſted Exeter, which, from the memory of William's clemency, ſtill remained faithful to him. Edric the Foreſter, calling in the aſſiſtance of the Welſh, laid ſiege to Shrewſbury, and made head againſt earl Brient and Fitz-Oſberne, who commanded in thoſe [m] quarters. The Engliſh, every where repenting their former eaſy ſubmiſſion, ſeemed determined to make by concert one great effort for the recovery of their liberties, and for the expulſion of their oppreſſors.

William, undiſmayed amidſt this ſcene of confuſion, aſſembled his forces; and, animating them with the proſpect of new con-

fiſcations and forfeitures, he marched againſt the rebels in the north; whom he regarded as the moſt formidable, and whoſe defeat he knew would ſtrike a terror into all the other malcontents. Joining policy to force, he tried before his approach to weaken the enemy, by detaching the Danes from them; and he engaged Oſberne, by large preſents, and by offering him the liberty of plundering the ſea coaſt, to retire, without committing farther hoſtilities, into Denmark.[n] Coſpatric alſo, in deſpair of ſucceſs, made his peace with the king; and, paying a ſum of money as an atonement for his inſurrection, was received into favour, and even inveſted with the earldom of Northumberland. Waltheof, who long defended York with great courage, was allured with this appearance of clemency; and, as William knew how to eſteem valour even in an enemy, that nobleman had no reaſon to repent of this confidence.[o] Even Edric, compelled by neceſſity, ſubmitted to the Conqueror, and received forgiveneſs, which was ſoon after followed by ſome degree of truſt and favour. Malcolm, coming too late to ſupport his confederates, was conſtrained to retire. And all the Engliſh rebels in other parts, except Hereward, who ſtill kept in his faſtneſſes, diſperſed themſelves, and left the Normans undiſputed maſters of the kingdom. Edgar Atheling, with his followers, fought again a retreat in Scotland from the purſuit of his enemies.

But the ſeeming clemency of William towards the Engliſh leaders proceeded only from artifice, or from his eſteem of individuals; his heart was hardened againſt all compaſſion towards the people; and he ſcrupled no meaſure, however violent or ſevere, which ſeemed requiſite to ſupport his plan of tyrannical adminiſtration. Senſible of the reſtleſs diſpoſition of the Northumbrians, he determined to incapacitate them ever after from giving diſturbance; and he iſſued orders for laying entirely waſte that fertile country, which, for the extent of ſixty miles, lies be-

tween the Humber and the Tees.[p] The houſes were reduced to aſhes by the mercileſs Normans; the cattle ſeized and driven away; the inſtruments of huſbandry deſtroyed; and the inhabitants compelled either to ſeek for a ſubſiſtence in the ſouthern parts of Scotland, or, if they lingered in England, from a reluctance to abandon their ancient habitations, they periſhed miſerably in the woods from cold and hunger. The lives of a hundred thouſand perſons are computed to have been ſacrificed to this ſtroke of barbarous policy;[q] which, by ſeeking a remedy for a temporary evil, thus inflicted a laſting wound on the power and populouſneſs of the nation.

But William, finding himſelf entirely maſter of a people who had given him ſuch ſenſible proofs of their impotent rage and animoſity, now reſolved to proceed to extremities againſt all the natives of England, and to reduce them to a condition in which they ſhould no longer be formidable to his government. The inſurrections and conſpiracies in ſo many parts of the kingdom had involved the bulk of the landed proprietors, more or leſs, in the guilt of treaſon; and the king took advantage of executing againſt them, with the utmoſt rigour, the laws of forfeiture and attainder. Their lives were indeed commonly ſpared; but their eſtates were confiſcated, and either annexed to the royal demeſnes, or conferred with the moſt profuſe bounty on the Normans and other foreigners.[r] While the king's declared intention was to depreſs, or rather entirely extirpate, the Engliſh gentry,[s] it is eaſy to believe that ſcarcely the form of juſtice would be obſerved in theſe violent proceedings;[t] and that any ſuſpicions ſerved as the moſt undoubted proofs of guilt againſt a people thus devoted to deſtruction. It was crime ſufficient in an Engliſhman to be opulent, or noble, or powerful. And the policy of the king, concurring with the rapacity of foreign adventurers, produced almoſt a total revolution in the landed pro-

perty of the kingdom. Ancient and honourable families were reduced to beggary; the nobles themſelves were every where treated with ignominy and contempt; they had the mortification of ſeeing their caſtles and manors poſſeſſed by Normans of the meaneſt birth and loweſt ſtations;[u] and they found themſelves carefully excluded from every road which led either to riches or preferment.[x]

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEUDAL LAW: 1070.

As power naturally follows property, this revolution alone gave great ſecurity to the foreigners; but William, by the new inſtitutions which he eſtabliſhed, took alſo care to retain for ever the military authority in thoſe hands which had enabled him to ſubdue the kingdom. He introduced into England the feudal law, which he found eſtabliſhed in France and Normandy, and which, during that age, was the foundation both of the ſtability and of the diſorders in moſt of the monarchical governments of Europe. He divided all the lands of England, with very few exceptions, beſides the royal demeſnes, into baronies; and he conferred theſe, with the reſervation of ſtated ſervices and payments, on the moſt conſiderable of his adventurers. Theſe great barons, who held immediately of the crown, ſhared out a great part of their lands to other foreigners, who were denominated knights or vaſſals, and who paid their lord the ſame duty and ſubmiſſion in peace and war which he himſelf owed to his ſovereign. The whole kingdom contained about ſeven hundred chief tenants, and ſixty thouſand two hundred and fifteen knights' fees;[y] and, as none of the native Engliſh were admitted into the firſt rank, the few who retained their landed property were glad to be received into the ſecond, and, under the protection of ſome powerful Norman, to load themſelves and their poſterity

with this grievous burden, for eſtates which they had received free from their anceſtors.[z] The ſmall mixture of Engliſh which entered into this civil or military fabric (for it partook of both ſpecies) was ſo reſtrained by ſubordination under the foreigners, that the Norman dominion ſeemed now to be fixed on the moſt durable baſis, and to defy all the efforts of its enemies.

The better to unite the parts of the government, and to bind them into one ſyſtem, which might ſerve both for defence againſt foreigners and for the ſupport of domeſtic tranquillity, William reduced the eccleſiaſtical revenues under the ſame feudal law; and, though he had courted the church on his invaſion and acceſſion, he now ſubjected it to ſervices which the clergy regarded as a grievous ſlavery, and as totally unbefitting their profeſſion. The biſhops and abbots were obliged, when required, to furniſh to the king, during war, a number of knights or military tenants, proportioned to the extent of property poſſeſſed by each ſee or abbey; and they were liable, in caſe of failure, to the ſame penalties which were exacted from the laity.[a] The pope and the eccleſiaſtics exclaimed againſt this tyranny, as they called it; but the king's authority was ſo well eſtabliſhed over the army, who held every thing from his bounty, that ſuperſtition itſelf, even in that age, when it was moſt prevalent, was conſtrained to bend under his ſuperior influence.

But, as the great body of the clergy were ſtill natives, the king had much reaſon to dread the effects of their reſentment; he therefore uſed the precaution of expelling the Engliſh from all the conſiderable dignities, and of advancing foreigners in their place. The partiality of the Confeſſor towards the Normans had been ſo great, that, aided by their ſuperior learning, it had promoted them to many of the ſees in England; and even before the period of the conqueſt ſcarcely more than ſix or ſeven of the prelates were natives of the country. But among theſe was

Stigand, archbiſhop of Canterbury; a man who, by his addreſs and vigour, by the greatneſs of his family and alliances, by the extent of his poſſeſſions, as well as by the dignity of his office and his authority among the Engliſh, gave jealouſy to the [b] king. Though William had on his acceſſion affronted this prelate, by employing the archbiſhop of York to officiate at his conſecration, he was careful on other occaſions to load him with honours and careſſes, and to avoid giving him farther offence till the opportunity ſhould offer of effecting his final deſtruction.[c] The ſuppreſſion of the late rebellions, and the total ſubjection of the Engliſh, made him hope that an attempt againſt Stigand, however violent, would be covered by his great ſucceſſes, and be overlooked amidſt the other important revolutions which affected ſo deeply the property and liberty of the kingdom. Yet, notwithſtanding theſe great advantages, he did not think it ſafe to violate the reverence uſually paid to the primate, but under cover of a new ſuperſtition, which he was the great inſtrument of introducing into England.

INNOVATION IN ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT.

The doctrine which exalted the papacy above all human power had gradually diffuſed itſelf from the city and court of Rome; and was, during that age, much more prevalent in the ſouthern than in the northern kingdoms of Europe. Pope Alexander, who had aſſiſted William in his conqueſts, naturally expected that the French and Normans would import into England the ſame reverence for his ſacred character with which they were impreſſed in their own country; and would break the ſpiritual as well as civil independency of the Saxons, who had hitherto conducted their eccleſiaſtical government with an acknowledgment indeed of primacy in the ſee of Rome, but without much

idea of its title to dominion or authority. As ſoon, therefore, as the Norman prince ſeemed fully eſtabliſhed on the throne, the pope diſpatched Ermenfroy, biſhop of Sion, as his legate into England; and this prelate was the firſt that had ever appeared with that character in any part of the Britiſh iſlands. The king, though he was probably led by principle to pay this ſubmiſſion to Rome, determined, as is uſual, to employ the incident as a means of ſerving his political purpoſes, and of degrading thoſe Engliſh prelates who were become obnoxious to him. The legate ſubmitted to become the inſtrument of his tyranny; and thought that the more violent the exertion of power, the more certainly did it confirm the authority of that court from which he derived his commiſſion. He ſummoned, therefore, a council of the prelates and abbots at Wincheſter; and, being aſſiſted by two cardinals, Peter and John, he cited before him Stigand, archbiſhop of Canterbury, to anſwer for his conduct. The primate was accuſed of three crimes; the holding of the ſee of Wincheſter together with that of Canterbury; the officiating in the pall of Robert his predeceſſor; and the having received his own pall from Benedict IX. who was afterwards depoſed for ſimony, and for intruſion into the papacy. Theſe crimes of Stigand were mere pretences; ſince the firſt had been a practice not unuſual in England, and was never any where ſubjected to a higher penalty than a reſignation of one of the ſees; the ſecond was a pure ceremonial; and, as Benedict was the only pope who then officiated, and his acts were never repealed, all the prelates of the church, eſpecially thoſe who lay at a diſtance, were excuſable for making their applications to him. Stigand's ruin, however, was reſolved on, and was proſecuted with great ſeverity. The legate degraded him from his dignity; the king confiſcated his eſtate, and caſt him into priſon, where he continued in poverty and want during the re-

mainder of his life. Like rigour was exerciſed againſt the other Engliſh prelates. Agelric, biſhop of Seleſey, and Agelmare of Elmham, were depoſed by the legate, and impriſoned by the king. Many conſiderable abbots ſhared the ſame fate. Egelwin, biſhop of Durham, fled the kingdom. Wulſtan of Worceſter, a man of an inoffenſive character, was the only Engliſh prelate that eſcaped this general proſcription,[e] and remained in poſſeſſion of his dignity. Aldred, archbiſhop of York, who had ſet the crown on William's head, had died a little before of grief and vexation, and had left his malediction to that prince, on account of the breach of his coronation oath, and of the extreme tyranny with which he ſaw he was determined to treat his Engliſh ſubjects.[f]

It was a fixed maxim in this reign, as well as in ſome of the ſubſequent, that no native of the iſland ſhould ever be advanced to any dignity, eccleſiaſtical, civil, or military.[g] The king, therefore, upon Stigand's depoſition, promoted Lanfranc, a Milaneſe monk, celebrated for his learning and piety, to the vacant ſee. This prelate was rigid in defending the prerogatives of his ſtation; and, after a long proceſs before the pope, he obliged Thomas, a Norman monk, who had been appointed to the ſee of York, to acknowledge the primacy of the archbiſhop of Canterbury. Where ambition can be ſo happy as to cover its enterpriſes, even to the perſon himſelf, under the appearance of principle, it is the moſt incurable and inflexible of all human paſſions. Hence Lanfranc's zeal in promoting the intereſts of the papacy, by which he himſelf augmented his own authority, was indefatigable, and met with proportionable ſucceſs. The devoted attachment to Rome continually increaſed in England; and, being favoured by the ſentiments of the conquerors, as well as by the monaſtic eſtabliſhments formerly introduced by Edred and by Edgar, it ſoon reached the ſame height at which it had

during ſome time, ſtood in France and Italy.[h] It afterwards went much farther; being favoured by that very remote ſituation which had at firſt obſtructed its progreſs; and being leſs checked by knowledge and a liberal education, which were ſtill ſomewhat more common in the ſouthern countries.

The prevalence of this ſuperſtitious ſpirit became dangerous to ſome of William's ſucceſſors, and incommodious to moſt of them: but the arbitrary ſway of this king over the Engliſh, and his extenſive authority over the foreigners, kept him from feeling any immediate inconveniencies from it. He retained the church in great ſubjection, as well as his lay ſubjects; and would allow none, of whatever character, to diſpute his ſovereign will and pleaſure. He prohibited his ſubjects from acknowledging any one for pope whom he himſelf had not previouſly received; he required that all the eccleſiaſtical canons, voted in any ſynod, ſhould firſt be laid before him, and be ratified by his authority; even bulls or letters from Rome could not legally be produced till they received the ſame ſanction; and none of his miniſters or barons, whatever offences they were guilty of, could be ſubjected to ſpiritual cenſures till he himſelf had given his conſent to their excommunication.[i] Theſe regulations were worthy of a ſovereign, and kept united the civil and eccleſiaſtical powers, which the principles introduced by this prince himſelf had an immediate tendency to ſeparate.

But the Engliſh had the cruel mortification to find that their king's authority, however acquired or however extended, was all employed in their oppreſſion; and that the ſcheme of their ſubjection, attended with every circumſtance of inſult and indignity,[k] was deliberately formed by the prince, and wantonly proſecuted by his followers.[l] William had even entertained the difficult project of totally aboliſhing the Engliſh language; and, for that purpoſe, he ordered that in all ſchools throughout the

kingdom the youth ſhould be inſtructed in the French tongue; a practice which was continued, from cuſtom, till after the reign of Edward III. and was never indeed totally diſcontinued in England. The pleadings in the ſupreme courts of judicature were in French;[m] the deeds were often drawn in the ſame language; the laws were compoſed in that idiom;[n] no other tongue was uſed at court; it became the language of all faſhionable company; and the Engliſh themſelves, aſhamed of their own country, affected to excel in that foreign dialect. From this attention of William, and from the extenſive foreign dominions long annexed to the crown of England, proceeded that mixture of French which is at preſent to be found in the Engliſh tongue, and which compoſes the greateſt and beſt part of our language. But, amidſt thoſe endeavours to depreſs the Engliſh nation, the king, moved by the remonſtrances of ſome of his prelates, and by the earneſt deſires of the people, reſtored a few of the laws of king Edward;[o] which, though ſeemingly of no great importance towards the protection of general liberty, gave them extreme ſatisfaction, as a memorial of their ancient government, and an unuſual mark of complaiſance in their imperious conquerors.[p]

The ſituation of the two great earls, Morcar and Edwin, became now very diſagreeable. Though they had retained their allegiance during this general inſurrection of their countrymen, they had not gained the king's confidence; and they found themſelves expoſed to the malignity of the courtiers, who envied them on account of their opulence and greatneſs, and at the ſame time involved them in that general contempt which they entertained for the Engliſh. Senſible that they had entirely loſt their dignity, and could not even hope to remain long in ſafety, they determined, though too late, to ſhare the ſame fate with their countrymen. While Edwin retired to his eſtate in the north,

with a view of commencing an inſurrection, Morcar took ſhelter in the Iſle of Ely with the brave Hereward; who, ſecured by the inacceſſible ſituation of the place, ſtill defended himſelf againſt the Normans. But this attempt ſerved only to accelerate the ruin of the few Engliſh who had hitherto been able to preſerve their rank or fortune during the paſt convulſions. William employed all his endeavours to ſubdue the Iſle of Ely; and, having ſurrounded it with flat bottomed boats, and made a cauſeway through the moraſſes to the extent of two miles, he obliged the rebels to ſurrender at diſcretion. Hereward alone forced his way, ſword in hand, through the enemy; and ſtill continued his hoſtilities by ſea againſt the Normans, till at laſt William, charmed with his bravery, received him into favour, and reſtored him to his eſtate. Earl Morcar, and Egelwin biſhop of Durham, who had joined the malcontents, were thrown into priſon; and the latter ſoon after died in confinement. Edwin, attempting to make his eſcape into Scotland, was betrayed by ſome of his followers, and was killed by a party of Normans, to the great affliction of the Engliſh, and even to that of William, who paid a tribute of generous tears to the memory of this gallant and beautiful youth. The king of Scotland, in hopes of profiting by theſe convulſions, had fallen upon the northern counties; but on the approach of William he retired; and when the king entered his country he was glad to make peace, and to pay the uſual homage to the Engliſh crown. To complete the king's proſperity, Edgar Atheling himſelf, deſpairing of ſucceſs, and weary of a fugitive life, ſubmitted to his enemy; and, receiving a decent penſion for his ſubſiſtence, was permitted to live in England unmoleſted. But theſe acts of generoſity towards the leaders were diſgraced, as uſual, by William's rigour againſt the inferior malcontents. He ordered the hands to be lopped off, and the eyes to be put out, of many of the priſoners

whom he had taken in the Iſle of Ely; and he diſperſed them in that miſerable condition throughout the country, as monuments of his ſeverity.

The province of Maine in France had, by the will of Herbert the laſt count, fallen under the dominion of William ſome years before his conqueſt of England; but the inhabitants, diſſatisfied with the Norman government, and inſtigated by Fulk, count of Anjou, who had ſome pretenſions to the ſucceſſion, now roſe in rebellion, and expelled the magiſtrates whom the king had placed over them. The full ſettlement of England afforded him leiſure to puniſh this inſult on his authority; but, being unwilling to remove his Norman forces from this iſland, he carried over a conſiderable army, compoſed almoſt entirely of Engliſh; and, joining them to ſome troops levied in Normandy, he entered the revolted province. The Engliſh appeared ambitious of diſtinguiſhing themſelves on this occaſion, and of retrieving that character of valour which had long been national among them; but which their late eaſy ſubjection under the Normans had ſomewhat degraded and obſcured. Perhaps too they hoped that, by their zeal and activity, they might recover the confidence of their ſovereign, as their anceſtors had formerly, by like means, gained the affections of Canute; and might conquer his inveterate prejudices in favour of his own countrymen. The king's military conduct, ſeconded by theſe brave troops, ſoon overcame all oppoſition in Maine; the inhabitants were obliged to ſubmit, and the count of Anjou relinquiſhed his pretenſions.

INSURRECTION OF THE NORMAN BARONS. 1074.

But during theſe tranſactions the government of England was greatly diſturbed; and that too by thoſe very foreigners who owed every thing to the king's bounty, and who were the ſole

object of his friendſhip and regard. The Norman barons, who had engaged with their duke in the conqueſt of England, were men of the moſt independent ſpirit; and, though they obeyed their leader in the field, they would have regarded with diſdain the richeſt acquiſitions, had they been required in return to ſubmit, in their civil government, to the arbitrary will of one man. But the imperious character of William, encouraged by his abſolute dominion over the Engliſh, and often impelled by the neceſſity of his affairs, had prompted him to ſtretch his authority over the Normans themſelves beyond what the free genius of that victorious people could eaſily bear. The diſcontents were become general among thoſe haughty nobles; and even Roger, earl of Hereford, ſon and heir of Fitz-Oſberne, the king's chief favourite, was ſtrongly infected with them. This nobleman, intending to marry his ſiſter to Ralph de Guader, earl of Norfolk, had thought it his duty to inform the king of his purpoſe, and to deſire the royal conſent; but, meeting with a refuſal, he proceeded nevertheleſs to complete the nuptials, and aſſembled all his friends, and thoſe of Guader, to attend the ſolemnity. The two earls, diſguſted by the denial of their requeſt, and dreading William's reſentment for their diſobedience, here prepared meaſures for a revolt; and, during the gaiety of the feſtival, while the company was heated with wine, they opened the deſign to their gueſts. They inveighed againſt the arbitrary conduct of the king; his tyranny over the Engliſh, whom they affected on this occaſion to commiſerate; his imperious behaviour to his barons of the nobleſt birth; and his apparent intention of reducing the victors and the vanquiſhed to a like ignominious ſervitude. Amidſt their complaints, the indignity of ſubmitting to a baſtard [q] was not forgotten; the certain proſpect of ſucceſs in a revolt, by the aſſiſtance of the Danes and the diſcontented Engliſh, was inſiſted on; and the whole company, inflamed with

the ſame ſentiments, and warmed by the jollity of the entertainment, entered, by a ſolemn engagement, into the deſign of ſhaking off the royal authority. Even earl Waltheof, who was preſent, inconſiderately expreſſed his approbation of the conſpiracy, and promiſed his concurrence towards its ſucceſs.

This nobleman, the laſt of the Engliſh who, for ſome generations, poſſeſſed any power or authority, had, after his capitulation at York, been received into favour by the Conqueror; had even married Judith, niece to that prince; and had been promoted to the earldoms of Huntingdon and Northampton.[r] Coſpatric, earl of Northumberland, having, on ſome new diſguſt from William, retired into Scotland, where he received the earldom of Dunbar from the bounty of Malcolm, Waltheof was appointed his ſucceſſor in that important command, and ſeemed ſtill to poſſeſs the confidence and friendſhip of his [s] ſovereign. But, as he was a man of generous principles, and loved his country, it is probable that the tyranny exerciſed over the Engliſh lay heavy upon his mind, and deſtroyed all the ſatisfaction which he could reap from his own grandeur and advancement. When a proſpect, therefore, was opened of retrieving their liberty, he haſtily embraced it; while the fumes of the liquor, and the ardour of the company, prevented him from reflecting on the conſequences of that raſh attempt. But, after his cool judgment returned, he foreſaw that the conſpiracy of thoſe diſcontented barons was not likely to prove ſucceſsful againſt the eſtabliſhed power of William; or, if it did, that the ſlavery of the Engliſh, inſtead of being alleviated by that event, would become more grievous under a multitude of foreign leaders, factious and ambitious, whoſe union and whoſe diſcord would be equally oppreſſive to the people. Tormented with theſe reflections, he opened his mind to his wife Judith, of whoſe fidelity he entertained no ſuſpicion; but who, having ſecretly fixed her

affections on another, took this opportunity of ruining her eaſy and credulous huſband. She conveyed intelligence of the conſpiracy to the king, and aggravated every circumſtance which ſhe believed would tend to incenſe him againſt Waltheof, and render him abſolutely implacable. Meanwhile the earl, ſtill dubious with regard to the part which he ſhould act, diſcovered the ſecret in confeſſion to Lanfranc, on whoſe probity and judgment he had a great reliance. He was perſuaded by the prelate that he owed no fidelity to thoſe rebellious barons, who had by ſurpriſe gained his conſent to a crime; that his firſt duty was to his ſovereign and benefactor; his next to himſelf and his family; and that, if he ſeized not the opportunity of making atonement for his guilt by revealing it, the temerity of the conſpirators was ſo great, that they would give ſome other perſon the means of acquiring the merit of the diſcovery. Waltheof, convinced by theſe arguments, went over to Normandy; but, though he was well received by the king, and thanked for his fidelity, the account, previouſly tranſmitted by Judith, had ſunk deep into William's mind, and had deſtroyed all the merit of her huſband's repentance.

The conſpirators, hearing of Waltheof's departure, immediately concluded their deſign to be betrayed; and they flew to arms before their ſchemes were ripe for execution, and before the arrival of the Danes, in whoſe aid they placed their chief confidence. The earl of Hereford was checked by Walter de Lacy, a great baron in thoſe parts; who, ſupported by the biſhop of Worceſter and the abbot of Eveſham, raiſed ſome forces, and prevented the earl from paſſing the Severn, or advancing into the heart of the kingdom. The earl of Norfolk was defeated at Fagadun, near Cambridge, by Odo the regent, aſſiſted by Richard de Bienfaite and William de Warrenne, the two juſticiaries. The priſoners taken in this action had their right foot

cut off, as a puniſhment of their treaſon. The earl himſelf eſcaped to Norwich; thence to Denmark; where the Daniſh fleet, which had made an unſucceſsful attempt upon the coaſt of England, ſoon after arrived, and brought him intelligence that all his confederates were ſuppreſſed, and were either killed, baniſhed, or taken priſoners.[n] Ralph retired in deſpair to Brittany, where he poſſeſſed a large eſtate and extenſive juriſdictions.

The king, who haſtened over to England in order to ſuppreſs the inſurrection, found that nothing remained but the puniſhment of the criminals, which he executed with great ſeverity. Many of the rebels were hanged; ſome had their eyes put out; others their hands cut off. But William, agreeably to his uſual maxims, ſhewed more lenity to their leader, the earl of Hereford, who was only condemned to a forfeiture of his eſtate, and to impriſonment during pleaſure. The king ſeemed even diſpoſed to remit this laſt part of the puniſhment, had not Roger, by a freſh inſolence, provoked him to render his confinement perpetual. But Waltheof, being an Engliſhman, was not treated with ſo much humanity; though his guilt, always much inferior to that of the other conſpirators, was atoned for by an early repentance and return to his duty. William, inſtigated by his niece, as well as by his rapacious courtiers, who longed for ſo rich a forfeiture, ordered him to be tried, condemned, and executed. The Engliſh, who conſidered this nobleman as the laſt reſource of their nation, grievouſly lamented his fate, and fancied that miracles were wrought by his reliques, as a teſtimony of his innocence and ſanctity. The infamous Judith, falling ſoon after under the king's diſpleaſure, was abandoned by all the world, and paſſed the reſt of her life in contempt, remorſe, and miſery.

Nothing remained to complete William's ſatisfaction but the puniſhment of Ralph de Guader; and he haſtened over to Nor-

mandy, in order to gratify his vengeance on that criminal. But, though the conteſt ſeemed very unequal between a private nobleman and the king of England, Ralph was ſo well ſupported both by the earl of Brittany and the king of France, that William, after beſieging him for ſome time in Dol, was obliged to abandon the enterpriſe, and make with thoſe powerful princes a peace, in which Ralph himſelf was included. England, during his abſence, remained in tranquillity; and nothing remarkable occurred, except two eccleſiaſtical ſynods, which were ſummoned, one at London, another at Wincheſter. In the former the precedency among the epiſcopal ſees was ſettled, and the ſeat of ſome of them was removed from ſmall villages to the moſt conſiderable town within the dioceſe. In the ſecond was tranſacted a buſineſs of more importance.

DISPUTE ABOUT INVESTITURES. 1076.

THE induſtry and perſeverance are ſurpriſing, with which the popes had been treaſuring up powers and pretenſions during ſo many ages of ignorance; while each pontiff employed every fraud for advancing purpoſes of imaginary piety, and cheriſhed all claims which might turn to the advantage of his ſucceſſors, though he himſelf could not expect ever to reap any benefit from them. All this immenſe ſtore of ſpiritual and civil authority was now devolved on Gregory VII. of the name of Hildebrand; the moſt enterpriſing pontiff that had ever filled that chair, and the leaſt reſtrained by fear, decency, or moderation. Not content with ſhaking off the yoke of the emperors, who had hitherto exerciſed the power of appointing the pope on every vacancy, at leaſt of ratifying his election, he undertook the arduous taſk of entirely disjoining the eccleſiaſtical from the civil power, and of excluding profane laymen from the right,

which they had aſſumed, of filling the vacancies of biſhoprics, abbies, and other ſpiritual dignities.[w] The ſovereigns, who had long exerciſed this power, and who had acquired it, not by encroachments on the church, but on the people, to whom it originally belonged,[x] made great oppoſition to this claim of the court of Rome; and Henry IV. the reigning emperor, defended this prerogative of his crown with a vigour and reſolution ſuitable to its importance. The few offices, either civil or military, which the feudal inſtitutions left the ſovereign the power of beſtowing, made the prerogative of conferring the paſtoral ring and ſtaff the moſt valuable jewel of the royal diadem; eſpecially as the general ignorance of the age beſtowed a conſequence on the eccleſiaſtical offices, even beyond the great extent of power and property which belonged to them. Superſtition, the child of ignorance, inveſted the clergy with an authority almoſt ſacred; and, as they engroſſed the little learning of the age, their interpoſition became requiſite in all civil buſineſs; and a real uſefulneſs in common life was thus ſuperadded to the ſpiritual ſanctity of their character.

When the uſurpations, therefore, of the church had come to ſuch maturity as to embolden her to attempt extorting the right of inveſtitures from the temporal power, Europe, eſpecially Italy and Germany, was thrown into the moſt violent convulſions; and the pope and the emperor waged implacable war on each other. Gregory dared to fulminate the ſentence of excommunication againſt Henry and his adherents; to pronounce him rightfully depoſed; to free his ſubjects from their oaths of allegiance; and, inſtead of ſhocking mankind by this groſs encroachment on the civil authority, he found the ſtupid people ready to ſecond his moſt exorbitant pretenſions. Every miniſter, ſervant, or vaſſal, of the emperor, who received any diſguſt, covered his rebellion under the pretence of principle; and even

the mother of this monarch, forgetting all the ties of nature, was ſeduced to countenance the inſolence of his enemies. Princes themſelves, not attentive to the pernicious conſequences of thoſe papal claims, employed them for their preſent purpoſes: and the controverſy, ſpreading into every city of Italy, engendered the parties of Guelf and Ghibbelin; the moſt durable and moſt inveterate factions that ever aroſe from the mixture of ambition and religious zeal. Beſides numberleſs aſſaſſinations, tumults, and convulſions, to which they gave riſe, it is computed that the quarrel occaſioned no leſs than ſixty battles in the reign of Henry IV. and eighteen in that of his ſucceſſor, Henry V. when the claims of the ſovereign pontiff finally prevailed.[y]

But the bold ſpirit of Gregory, not diſmayed with the vigorous oppoſition which he met with from the emperor, extended his uſurpations all over Europe; and, well knowing the nature of mankind, whoſe blind aſtoniſhment ever inclines them to yield to the moſt impudent pretenſions, he ſeemed determined to ſet no bounds to the ſpiritual, or rather temporal, monarchy which he had undertaken to erect. He pronounced the ſentence of excommunication againſt Nicephorus, emperor of the Eaſt. Robert Guiſcard, the adventurous Norman who had acquired the dominion of Naples, was attacked by the ſame dangerous weapon. He degraded Boleſlas, king of Poland, from the rank of king; and even deprived Poland of the title of a kingdom. He attempted to treat Philip, king of France, with the ſame rigour which he had employed againſt the emperor.[z] He pretended to the entire property and dominion of Spain; and he parcelled it out amongſt adventurers, who undertook to conquer it from the Saracens, and to hold it in vaſſalage under the ſee of [a] Rome. Even the Chriſtian biſhops, on whoſe aid he relied for ſubduing the temporal princes, ſaw that he was determined to reduce them to ſervitude; and, by aſſuming the whole legiſlative and

judicial power of the church, to centre all authority in the ſovereign pontiff.[b]

William the Conqueror, the moſt potent, the moſt haughty, and the moſt vigorous, prince in Europe, was not, amidſt all his ſplendid ſucceſſes, ſecure from the attacks of this enterpriſing pontiff. Gregory wrote him a letter, requiring him to fulfil his promiſe in doing homage for the kingdom of England to the ſee of Rome, and to ſend him over that tribute which all his predeceſſors had been accuſtomed to pay to the vicar of Chriſt. By the tribute he meant Peter's pence; which, though at firſt a charitable donation of the Saxon princes, was interpreted, according to the uſual practice of the Romiſh court, to be a badge of ſubjection acknowledged by the kingdom. William replied that the money ſhould be remitted as uſual; but that neither had he promiſed to do homage to Rome, nor was it in the leaſt his purpoſe to impoſe that ſervitude on his ſtate.[c] And, the better to ſhew Gregory his independence, he ventured, notwithſtanding the frequent complaints of the pope, to refuſe to the Engliſh biſhops the liberty of attending a general council, which that pontiff had ſummoned againſt his enemies.

But, though the king diſplayed this vigour in ſupporting the royal dignity, he was infected with the general ſuperſtition of the age; and he did not perceive the ambitious ſcope of thoſe inſtitutions, which, under colour of ſtrictneſs in religion, were introduced or promoted by the court of Rome. Gregory, while he was throwing all Europe into combuſtion by his violence and impoſtures, affected an anxious care for the purity of manners; and even the chaſte pleaſures of the marriage bed were inconſiſtent, in his opinion, with the ſanctity of the ſacerdotal character. He had iſſued a decree prohibiting the marriage of prieſts; excommunicating all clergymen who retained their wives; declaring ſuch unlawful commerce to be fornication, and rendering

it criminal in the laity to attend divine worſhip when ſuch profane prieſts officiated at the altar.[d] This point was a great object in the politics of the Roman pontiffs; and it coſt them infinitely more pains to eſtabliſh it than the propagation of any ſpeculative abſurdity which they had ever attempted to introduce. Many ſynods were ſummoned in different parts of Europe before it was finally ſettled; and it was there conſtantly remarked that the younger clergymen complied cheerfully with the pope's decrees in this particular, and that the chief reluctance appeared in thoſe who were more advanced in years: an event ſo little conſonant to men's natural expectations, that it could not fail to be gloſſed on, even in that blind and ſuperſtitious age. William allowed the pope's legate to aſſemble, in his abſence, a ſynod at Wincheſter, in order to eſtabliſh the celibacy of the clergy; but the church of England could not yet be carried the whole length expected. The ſynod was content with decreeing that the biſhops ſhould not thenceforth ordain any prieſts or deacons without exacting from them a promiſe of celibacy; but they enacted that none, except thoſe who belonged to collegiate or cathedral churches, ſhould be obliged to ſeparate from their wives.

REVOLT OF PRINCE ROBERT.

THE king paſſed ſome years in Normandy; but his long reſidence there was not entirely owing to his declared preference of that duchy: his preſence was alſo neceſſary for compoſing thoſe diſturbances which had ariſen in that favourite territory, and which had even originally proceeded from his own family. Robert, his eldeſt ſon, ſurnamed Gambaron or Courthoſe, from his ſhort legs, was a prince who inherited all the bravery of his family and nation; but without that policy and diſſimulation by

which his father was ſo much diſtinguiſhed, and which, no leſs than his military valour, had contributed to his great ſucceſſes. Greedy of fame, impatient of contradiction, without reſerve in his friendſhips, declared in his enmities, this prince could endure no control, even from his imperious father; and openly aſpired to that independence to which his temper, as well as ſome circumſtances in his ſituation, ſtrongly invited him.[e] When William firſt received the ſubmiſſions of the province of Maine, he had promiſed the inhabitants that Robert ſhould be their prince; and before he undertook the expedition againſt England he had, on the application of the French court, declared him his ſucceſſor in Normandy, and had obliged the barons of that duchy to do him homage as their future ſovereign. By this artifice he had endeavoured to appeaſe the jealouſy of his neighbours, as affording them a proſpect of ſeparating England from his dominions on the continent; but, when Robert demanded of him the execution of thoſe engagements, he gave him an abſolute refuſal; and told him, according to the homely ſaying, that he never intended to throw off his clothes till he went to [f] bed. Robert openly declared his diſcontent; and was ſuſpected of ſecretly inſtigating the king of France and the earl of Brittany to the oppoſition which they made to William, and which had formerly fruſtrated his attempts upon the town of Dol. And, as the quarrel ſtill augmented, Robert proceeded to entertain a ſtrong jealouſy of his two ſurviving brothers, William and Henry (for Richard was killed in hunting, by a ſtag); who, by greater ſubmiſſion and complaiſance, had acquired the affections of their father. In this diſpoſition on both ſides, the greateſt trifle ſufficed to produce a rupture between them.

The three princes, reſiding with their father in the caſtle of l'Aigle in Normandy, were one day engaged in ſport together; and, after ſome mirth and jollity, the two younger took a fancy

of throwing over ſome water on Robert as he paſſed through the court on leaving their apartment;[g] a frolic which he would naturally have regarded as innocent, had it not been for the ſuggeſtions of Alberic de Grentmeſnil, ſon of that Hugh de Grentmeſnil whom William had formerly deprived of his fortunes, when that baron deſerted him during his greateſt difficulties in England. The young man, mindful of the injury, perſuaded the prince that this action was meant as a public affront, which it behoved him in honour to reſent; and the choleric Robert, drawing his ſword, ran up ſtairs with an intention of taking revenge on his brothers.[h] The whole caſtle was filled with tumult, which the king himſelf, who haſtened from his apartment, found ſome difficulty to appeaſe. But he could by no means appeaſe the reſentment of his eldeſt ſon; who, complaining of his partiality, and fancying that no proper atonement had been made him for the inſult, left the court that very evening, and haſtened to Rouen, with an intention of ſeizing the citadel of that [i] place. But, being diſappointed in this view by the precaution and vigilance of Roger de Ivery, the governor, he fled to Hugh de Neufchatel, a powerful Norman baron, who gave him protection in his caſtles; and he openly levied war againſt his father.[k] The popular character of the prince, and a ſimilarity of manners, engaged all the young nobility of Normandy and Maine, as well as of Anjou and Brittany, to take part with him; and it was ſuſpected that Matilda his mother, whoſe favourite he was, ſupported him in his rebellion by ſecret remittances of money, and by the encouragement which ſhe gave his partiſans.

All the hereditary provinces of William, as well as his family, were, during ſeveral years, thrown into convulſions by this war; and he was at laſt obliged to have recourſe to England, where that ſpecies of military government which he had eſtabliſhed gave him greater authority than the ancient feudal inſtitutions

permitted him to exercife in Normandy. He called over an army of Engliſh under his ancient captains, who ſoon expelled Robert and his adherents from their retreats, and reſtored the authority of the ſovereign in all his dominions. The young prince was obliged to take ſhelter in the caſtle of Gerberoy in the Beauvoiſis; which the king of France, who ſecretly fomented all theſe diſſenſions, had provided for him. In this fortreſs he was cloſely beſieged by his father; againſt whom, having a ſtrong garriſon, he made an obſtinate defence. There paſſed under the walls of this place many rencounters, which reſembled more the ſingle combats of chivalry than the military actions of armies; but one of them was remarkable for its circumſtances and its event. Robert happened to engage the king, who was concealed by his helmet; and, both of them being valiant, a fierce combat enſued, till at laſt the young prince wounded his father in the arm, and unhorſed him. On his calling out for aſſiſtance, his voice diſcovered him to his ſon; who, ſtruck with remorſe for his paſt guilt, and aſtoniſhed with the apprehenſions of one much greater, which he had ſo nearly incurred, inſtantly threw himſelf at his father's feet, craved pardon for his offences, and offered to purchaſe forgiveneſs by any atonement.[1] The reſentment harboured by William was ſo implacable, that he did not immediately correſpond to this dutiful ſubmiſſion of his ſon with like tenderneſs; but, giving him his malediction, departed for his own camp on Robert's horſe, which that prince had aſſiſted him to mount. He ſoon after raiſed the ſiege, and marched with his army to Normandy: where the interpoſition of the queen, and other common friends, brought about a reconcilement; which was probably not a little forwarded by the generoſity of the ſon's behaviour in this action, and by the returning ſenſe of his paſt miſconduct. The king ſeemed ſo fully appeaſed, that he even took Robert with him into England; where he intruſted him

with the command of an army, in order to repel an inroad of Malcolm, king of Scotland, and to retaliate by a like inroad into that country. The Welſh, unable to reſiſt William's power, were, about the ſame time, neceſſitated to pay a compenſation for their incurſions; and every thing was reduced to full tranquillity in this iſland.

DOMESDAY BOOK. 1081.

This ſtate of affairs gave William leiſure to begin and finiſh an undertaking, which proves his extenſive genius, and does honour to his memory: it was a general ſurvey of all the lands in the kingdom; their extent in each diſtrict; their proprietors, tenures, value; the quantity of meadow, paſture, wood, and arable land, which they contained; and in ſome counties the number of tenants, cottagers, and ſlaves of all denominations, who lived upon them. He appointed commiſſioners for this purpoſe, who entered every particular in their regiſter by the verdict of juries; and, after a labour of ſix years (for the work was ſo long in finiſhing), brought him an exact account of all the landed property of his kingdom.[m] This monument, called Domeſday book, the moſt valuable piece of antiquity poſſeſſed by any nation, is ſtill preſerved in the Exchequer; and, though only ſome extracts of it have hitherto been publiſhed, it ſerves to illuſtrate to us, in many particulars, the ancient ſtate of England. The great Alfred had finiſhed a like ſurvey of the kingdom in his time, which was long kept at Wincheſter, and which probably ſerved as a model to William in this undertaking.[n]

The king was naturally a great economiſt; and, though no prince had ever been more bountiful to his officers and ſervants, it was merely becauſe he had rendered himſelf univerſal proprietor of England, and had a whole kingdom to beſtow. He

reſerved an ample revenue for the crown; and, in the general diſtribution of land among his followers, he kept poſſeſſion of no leſs than fourteen hundred and twenty-two manors in different parts of England,[o] which paid him rent, either in money, or in corn, cattle, and the uſual produce of the ſoil. An ancient hiſtorian computes that his annual fixed income, beſides eſcheats, fines, reliefs, and other caſual profits to a great value, amounted to near four hundred thouſand pounds a year;[p] a ſum which, if all circumſtances be attended to, will appear wholly incredible. A pound in that age, as we have already obſerved, contained three times the weight of ſilver that it does at preſent; and the ſame weight of ſilver, by the moſt probable computation, would purchaſe near ten times more of the neceſſaries of life, though not in the ſame proportion of the finer manufactures. This revenue, therefore, of William, would be equal to at leaſt nine or ten millions at preſent; and, as that prince had neither fleet nor army to ſupport, (the former being only an occaſional expenſe, and the latter being maintained, without any charge to him, by his military vaſſals) we muſt thence conclude that no emperor or prince, in any age or nation, can be compared to the Conqueror for opulence and riches. This leads us to ſuſpect a great miſtake in the computation of the hiſtorian: though, if we conſider that avarice is always imputed to William as one of his vices; and that, having by the ſword rendered himſelf maſter of all the lands in the kingdom, he would certainly in the partition retain a great proportion for his own ſhare; we can ſcarcely be guilty of any error in aſſerting that perhaps no king of England was ever more opulent, was more able to ſupport, by his revenue, the ſplendour and magnificence of a court, or could beſtow more on his pleaſures, or in liberalities to his ſervants and favourites.[q]

THE NEW FOREST.

THERE was one pleaſure to which William, as well as all the Normans and ancient Saxons, was extremely addicted, and that was hunting: but this pleaſure he indulged more at the expenſe of his unhappy ſubjects, whoſe intereſts he always diſregarded, than to the loſs or diminution of his own revenue. Not content with thoſe large foreſts which former kings poſſeſſed in all parts of England, he reſolved to make a new foreſt near Wincheſter, the uſual place of his reſidence; and for that purpoſe he laid waſte the country in Hampſhire for an extent of thirty miles, expelled the inhabitants from their houſes, ſeized their property, even demoliſhed churches and convents, and made the ſufferers no compenſation for the injury.[r] At the ſame time he enacted new laws, by which he prohibited all his ſubjects from hunting in any of his foreſts, and rendered the penalties more ſevere than ever had been inflicted for ſuch offences. The killing of a deer or boar, or even a hare, was puniſhed with the loſs of the delinquent's eyes; and that at a time when the killing of a man could be atoned for by paying a moderate fine or compoſition.

The tranſactions recorded during the remainder of this reign may be conſidered more as domeſtic occurrences, which concern the prince, than as national events, which regard England. Odo, biſhop of Baieux, the king's uterine brother, whom he had created earl of Kent, and intruſted with a great ſhare of power during his whole reign, had amaſſed immenſe riches; and, agreeably to the uſual progreſs of human wiſhes, he began to regard his preſent acquiſitions but as a ſtep to farther grandeur. He had formed the chimerical project of buying the papacy; and, though Gregory, the reigning pope, was not of advanced years, the prelate had confided ſo much in the predictions of an aſtro-

loger, that he reckoned upon the pontiff's death, and upon attaining, by his own intrigues and money, that envied ſtate of greatneſs. Reſolving, therefore, to remit all his riches to Italy, he had perſuaded many conſiderable barons, and among the reſt Hugh earl of Cheſter, to take the ſame courſe; in hopes that, when he ſhould mount the papal throne, he would beſtow on them more conſiderable eſtabliſhments in that country. The king, from whom all theſe projects had been carefully concealed, at laſt got intelligence of the deſign, and ordered Odo to be arreſted. His officers, from reſpect to the immunities which the eccleſiaſtics now aſſumed, ſcrupled to execute the command, till the king himſelf was obliged in perſon to ſeize him; and, when Odo inſiſted that he was a prelate, and exempt from all temporal juriſdiction, William replied that he arreſted him not as biſhop of Baieux, but as earl of Kent. He was ſent priſoner to Normandy; and, notwithſtanding the remonſtrances and menaces of Gregory, was detained in cuſtody during the remainder of this reign.

Another domeſtic event gave the king much more concern; it was the death of Matilda his conſort, whom he tenderly loved, and for whom he had ever preſerved the moſt ſincere friendſhip. Three years afterwards he paſſed into Normandy, and carried with him Edgar Atheling, to whom he willingly granted permiſſion to make a pilgrimage to the holy land.

WAR WITH FRANCE. 1087.

He was detained on the continent by a miſunderſtanding, which broke out between him and the king of France, and which was occaſioned by inroads made into Normandy by ſome French barons on the frontiers. It was little in the power of princes at that time to reſtrain their licentious nobility; but William ſuſ-

pected that theſe barons durſt not have provoked his indignation, had they not been aſſured of the countenance and protection of Philip. His diſpleaſure was increaſed by the account he received of ſome railleries which that monarch had thrown out againſt him. William, who was become corpulent, had been detained in bed ſome time by ſickneſs; upon which Philip expreſſed his ſurpriſe that his brother of England ſhould be ſo long in being delivered of his big belly. The king ſent him word that, as ſoon as he was up, he would preſent ſo many lights at Notre-dame as would perhaps give little pleaſure to the king of France; alluding to the uſual practice at that time of women after childbirth. Immediately on his recovery he led an army into L'Iſle de France, laid every thing waſte with fire and ſword, and took the town of Mante, which he reduced to aſhes.

DEATH AND CHARACTER OF WILLIAM.

But the progreſs of theſe hoſtilities was ſtopped by an accident, which ſoon after put an end to William's life. His horſe ſtarting aſide of a ſudden, he bruiſed his belly on the pommel of the ſaddle; and, being in a bad habit of body, as well as ſomewhat advanced in years, he began to apprehend the conſequences, and ordered himſelf to be carried in a litter to the monaſtery of St. Gervas. Finding his illneſs increaſe, and being ſenſible of the approach of death, he diſcovered at laſt the vanity of all human grandeur, and was ſtruck with remorſe for thoſe horrible cruelties and acts of violence which, in the attainment and defence of it, he had committed during the courſe of his reign over England. He endeavoured to make atonement by preſents to churches and monaſteries; and he iſſued orders that earl Morcar, Siward, Bearne, and other Engliſh priſoners, ſhould be ſet at liberty. He was even prevailed on, though not with-

out reluctance, to conſent, with his dying breath, to releaſe his brother Odo, againſt whom he was extremely incenſed. He left Normandy and Maine to his eldeſt ſon Robert; he wrote to Lanfranc, deſiring him to crown William king of England; he bequeathed to Henry nothing but the poſſeſſions of his mother Matilda, but foretold that he would one day ſurpaſs both his brothers in power and opulence. He expired on the ninth of September, 1087, in the ſixty-third year of his age, in the twenty-firſt year of his reign over England, and in the fifty-fourth of that over Normandy.

Few princes have been more fortunate than this great monarch, or were better entitled to grandeur and proſperity, from the abilities and the vigour of mind which he diſplayed in all his conduct. His ſpirit was bold and enterpriſing, yet guided by prudence: his ambition, which was exorbitant, and lay little under the reſtraints of juſtice, ſtill leſs under thoſe of humanity, ever ſubmitted to the dictates of ſound policy. Born in an age when the minds of men were intractable and unacquainted with ſubmiſſion, he was yet able to direct them to his purpoſes; and, partly from the aſcendant of his vehement character, partly from art and diſſimulation, to eſtabliſh an unlimited authority. Though not inſenſible to generoſity, he was hardened againſt compaſſion; and he ſeemed equally oſtentatious and equally ambitious of ſhew and parade in his clemency and in his ſeverity. The maxims of his adminiſtration were auſtere; but might have been uſeful, had they been ſolely employed to preſerve order in an eſtabliſhed government:[s] they were ill calculated for ſoftening the rigours which, under the moſt gentle management, are inſeparable from conqueſt. His attempt againſt England was the laſt great enterpriſe of the kind which, during the courſe of ſeven hundred years, has fully ſucceeded in Europe; and the force of his genius broke through thoſe limits, which firſt the feudal inſtitu-

tions, then the refined policy of princes, have fixed to the ſeveral ſtates of Chriſtendom. Though he rendered himſelf infinitely odious to his Engliſh ſubjects, he tranſmitted his power to his poſterity, and the throne is ſtill filled by his deſcendants: a proof that the foundations which he laid were firm and ſolid; and that, amidſt all his violence, while he ſeemed only to gratify the preſent paſſion, he had ſtill an eye towards futurity.

Some writers have been deſirous of refuſing to this prince the title of Conqueror in the ſenſe which that term commonly bears; and, on pretence that the word is ſometimes in old books applied to ſuch as make an acquiſition of territory by any means, they are willing to reject William's title, by right of war, to the crown of England. It is needleſs to enter into a controverſy which, by the terms of it, muſt neceſſarily degenerate into a diſpute of words. It ſuffices to ſay that the duke of Normandy's firſt invaſion of the iſland was hoſtile; that his ſubſequent adminiſtration was entirely ſupported by arms; that in the very frame of his laws he made a diſtinction between the Normans and Engliſh, to the advantage of the former;[t] that he acted in every thing as abſolute maſter over the natives, whoſe intereſt and affections he totally diſregarded; and that, if there was an interval when he aſſumed the appearance of a legal ſovereign, the period was very ſhort, and was nothing but a temporary ſacrifice, which he, as has been the caſe with moſt conquerors, was obliged to make, of his inclination to his preſent policy. Scarce any of thoſe revolutions, which, both in hiſtory and in common language, have always been denominated conqueſts, appear equally violent, or were attended with ſo ſudden an alteration both of power and property. The Roman ſtate, which ſpread its dominion over Europe, left the rights of individuals in a great meaſure untouched; and thoſe civilized conquerors, while they made their own country the ſeat of empire, found

that they could draw moſt advantage from the ſubjected provinces, by ſecuring to the natives the free enjoyment of their own laws and of their private poſſeſſions. The barbarians, who ſubdued the Roman empire, though they ſettled in the conquered countries, yet, being accuſtomed to a rude uncultivated life, found a part only of the land ſufficient to ſupply all their wants; and they were not tempted to ſeize extenſive poſſeſſions, which they knew neither how to cultivate nor enjoy. But the Normans and other foreigners, who followed the ſtandard of William, while they made the vanquiſhed kingdom the ſeat of government, were yet ſo far advanced in arts as to be acquainted with the advantages of a large property; and, having totally ſubdued the natives, they puſhed the rights of conqueſt (very extenſive in the eyes of avarice and ambition, however narrow in thoſe of reaſon) to the utmoſt extremity againſt them. Except the former conqueſt of England by the Saxons themſelves, who were induced by peculiar circumſtances to proceed even to the extermination of the natives, it would be difficult to find in all hiſtory a revolution more deſtructive, or attended with a more complete ſubjection of the ancient inhabitants. Contumely ſeems even to have been wantonly added to oppreſſion; and the natives were univerſally reduced to ſuch a ſtate of meanneſs and poverty, that the Engliſh name became a term of reproach; and ſeveral generations elapſed before one family of Saxon pedigree was raiſed to any conſiderable honours, or could ſo much as attain the rank of baron of the realm." Theſe facts are ſo apparent, from the whole tenor of the Engliſh hiſtory, that none would have been tempted to deny or elude them, were they not heated by the controverſies of faction; while one party was abſurdly afraid of thoſe abſurd conſequences which they ſaw the other party inclined to draw from this event. But it is evident that the preſent rights and privileges of the people, who are a

mixture of Engliſh and Normans, can never be affected by a tranſaction which paſſed ſeven hundred years ago; and, as all ancient authors,[w] who lived neareſt the time, and beſt knew the ſtate of the country, unanimouſly ſpeak of the Norman dominion as a conqueſt by war and arms, no reaſonable man, from the fear of imaginary conſequences, will ever be tempted to reject their concurring and undoubted teſtimony.

King William had iſſue, beſides his three ſons who ſurvived him, five daughters; to wit, (1) Cicily, a nun in the monaſtery of Feſchamp, afterwards abbeſs in the holy Trinity at Caen, where ſhe died in 1127. (2) Conſtantia, married to Alan Fergent, earl of Brittany. She died without iſſue. (3) Alice, contracted to Harold. (4) Adela, married to Stephen, earl of Blois, by whom ſhe had four ſons; William, Theobald, Henry, and Stephen; of whom the elder was neglected, on account of the imbecility of his underſtanding. (5) Agatha, who died a virgin, but was betrothed to the king of Gallicia. She died on her journey thither, before ſhe joined her bridegroom.

CHAP. V.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

ACCESSION OF WILLIAM RUFUS: CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE KING: INVASION OF NORMANDY: THE CRUSADES: ACQUISITION OF NORMANDY: QUARREL WITH ANSELM THE PRIMATE: DEATH: AND CHARACTER OF WILLIAM RUFUS.

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CHAPTER V.

WILLIAM RUFUS.

1087....1100.

ACCESSION OF WILLIAM RUFUS....CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE KING ....INVASION OF NORMANDY....THE CRUSADES....ACQUISITION OF NORMANDY....QUARREL WITH ANSELM THE PRIMATE....DEATH AND CHARACTER OF RUFUS.

ACCESSION OF WILLIAM RUFUS. 1087.

WILLIAM, furnamed Rufus, or the Red, from the colour of his hair, had no ſooner procured his father's recommendatory letter to Lanfranc the primate, than he haſtened to take meaſures for ſecuring to himſelf the government of England. Senſible that a deed ſo unformal, and ſo little prepared, which violated Robert's right of primogeniture, might meet with great oppoſition, he truſted entirely for ſucceſs to his own celerity; and, having left St. Gervas while William was breathing his laſt, he arrived in England before intelligence of his father's death had reached that kingdom.[x] Pretending orders from the king, he ſecured the fortreſſes of Dover, Pevenſey, and Haſtings, whoſe ſituation rendered them of the greateſt importance; and he got

poſſeſſion of the royal treaſure at Wincheſter, amounting to the ſum of ſixty thouſand pounds, by which he hoped to encourage and increaſe his partiſans.[y] The primate, whoſe rank and reputation in the kingdom gave him great authority, had been intruſted with the care of his education, and had conferred on him the honour of knighthood;[z] and, being connected with him by theſe ties, and probably deeming his pretenſions juſt, declared that he would pay a willing obedience to the laſt will of the Conqueror, his friend and benefactor. Having aſſembled ſome biſhops, and ſome of the principal nobility, he inſtantly proceeded to the ceremony of crowning the new king;[a] and by this diſpatch endeavoured to prevent all faction and reſiſtance. At the ſame time Robert, who had been already acknowledged ſucceſſor to Normandy, took peaceable poſſeſſion of that duchy.

CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE KING.

But, though this partition appeared to have been made without any violence or oppoſition, there remained in England many cauſes of diſcontent, which ſeemed to menace that kingdom with a ſudden revolution. The barons, who generally poſſeſſed large eſtates both in England and in Normandy, were uneaſy at the ſeparation of thoſe territories; and foreſaw that, as it would be impoſſible for them to preſerve long their allegiance to two maſters, they muſt neceſſarily reſign either their ancient patrimony or their new acquiſitions.[b] Robert's title to the duchy they eſteemed inconteſtible; his claim to the kingdom plauſible; and they all deſired that this prince, who alone had any pretenſions to unite theſe ſtates, ſhould be put in poſſeſſion of both. A compariſon alſo of the perſonal qualities of the two brothers led them to give the preference to the elder. The duke was brave, open, ſincere, generous; even his predominant faults, his

extreme indolence and facility, were not diſagreeable to thoſe haughty barons who affected independence, and ſubmitted with reluctance to a vigorous adminiſtration in their ſovereign. The king, though equally brave, was violent, haughty, tyrannical; and ſeemed diſpoſed to govern more by the fear than by the love of his ſubjects. Odo biſhop of Baieux, and Robert earl of Mortaigne, maternal brothers of the Conqueror, envying the great credit of Lanfranc, which was increaſed by his late ſervices, enforced all theſe motives with their partiſans, and engaged them in a formal conſpiracy to dethrone the king. They communicated their deſign to Euſtace count of Bologne, Roger earl of Shrewſbury and Arundel, Robert de Beleſme, his eldeſt ſon, William biſhop of Durham, Robert de Moubray, Roger Bigod, Hugh de Grentmeſnil; and they eaſily procured the aſſent of theſe potent noblemen. The conſpirators, retiring to their caſtles, haſtened to put themſelves in a military poſture; and, expecting to be ſoon ſupported by a powerful army from Normandy, they had already begun hoſtilities in many places.

The king, ſenſible of his perilous ſituation, endeavoured to engage the affections of the native Engliſh. As that people were now ſo thoroughly ſubdued that they no longer aſpired to the recovery of their ancient liberties, and were content with the proſpect of ſome mitigation in the tyranny of the Norman princes, they zealouſly embraced William's cauſe, upon receiving general promiſes of good treatment, and of enjoying the licenſe of hunting in the royal foreſts. The king was ſoon in a ſituation to take the field; and, as he knew the danger of delay, he ſuddenly marched into Kent; where his uncles had already ſeized the fortreſſes of Pevenſey and Rocheſter. Theſe places he ſucceſſively reduced by famine; and, though he was prevailed on by the earl of Cheſter, William de Warrenne, and Robert Fitz Hammon, who had embraced his cauſe, to ſpare the lives of the

rebels, he confiſcated all their eſtates, and baniſhed them the kingdom.[c] This ſucceſs gave authority to his negociations with Roger earl of Shrewſbury, whom he detached from the confederates; and, as his powerful fleet, joined to the indolent conduct of Robert, prevented the arrival of the Norman ſuccours, all the other rebels found no reſource but in flight or ſubmiſſion. Some of them received a pardon, but the greater part were attainted; and the king beſtowed their eſtates on the Norman barons who had remained faithful to him.

William, freed from the danger of theſe inſurrections, took little care of fulfilling his promiſes to the Engliſh; who ſtill found themſelves expoſed to the ſame oppreſſions which they had undergone during the reign of the Conqueror, and which were rather augmented by the violent impetuous temper of the preſent monarch. The death of Lanfranc, who retained great influence over him, gave ſoon after a full career to his tyranny; and all orders of men found reaſon to complain of an arbitrary and illegal adminiſtration. Even the privileges of the church, held ſacred in thoſe days, were a feeble rampart againſt his uſurpations. He ſeized the temporalities of all the vacant biſhoprics and abbies; he delayed the appointing of ſucceſſors to thoſe dignities, that he might the longer enjoy the profits of their revenue; he beſtowed ſome of the church lands in property on his captains and favourites; and he openly ſet to ſale ſuch ſees and abbies as he thought proper to diſpoſe of. Though the murmurs of the eccleſiaſtics, which were quickly propagated to the nation, roſe high againſt this grievance, the terror of William's authority, confirmed by the ſuppreſſion of the late inſurrections, retained every one in ſubjection, and preſerved general tranquillity in England.

INVASION OF NORMANDY. 1090.

THE king even thought himſelf enabled to diſturb his brother in the poſſeſſion of Normandy. The looſe and negligent adminiſtration of that prince had emboldened the Norman barons to affect a great independency; and their mutual quarrels and devaſtations had rendered that whole territory a ſcene of violence and outrage. Two of them, Walter and Odo, were bribed by William to deliver the fortreſſes of St. Valori and Albemarle into his hands. Others ſoon after imitated the example of revolt; while Philip, king of France, who ought to have protected his vaſſal in the poſſeſſion of his fief, was, after making ſome efforts in his favour, engaged by large preſents to remain neuter. The duke had alſo reaſon to apprehend danger from the intrigues of his brother Henry. This young prince, who had inherited nothing of his father's great poſſeſſions but ſome of his money, had furniſhed Robert, while he was making his preparations againſt England, with the ſum of three thouſand marks; and, in return for ſo ſlender a ſupply, had been put in poſſeſſion of the Cotentin, which comprehended near a third of the duchy of Normandy. Robert afterwards, upon ſome ſuſpicion, threw him into priſon; but, finding himſelf expoſed to invaſion from the king of England, and dreading the conjunction of the two brothers againſt him, he now gave Henry his liberty, and even made uſe of his aſſiſtance in ſuppreſſing the inſurrections of his rebellious ſubjects. Conan, a rich burgeſs of Rouen, had entered into a conſpiracy to deliver that city to William; but Henry, on the detection of his guilt, carried the traitor up to a high tower, and with his own hands flung him from the battlements.

The king appeared in Normandy at the head of an army; and affairs ſeemed to have come to extremity between the brothers;

when the nobility on both ſides, ſtrongly connected by intereſt and alliances, interpoſed, and mediated an accommodation. The chief advantage of this treaty accrued to William, who obtained poſſeſſion of the territory of Eu, the towns of Aumale, Feſcamp, and other places: but in return he promiſed that he would aſſiſt his brother in ſubduing Maine, which had rebelled; and that the Norman barons, attainted in Robert's cauſe, ſhould be reſtored to their eſtates in England. The two brothers alſo ſtipulated that, on the demiſe of either without iſſue, the ſurvivor ſhould inherit all his dominions; and twelve of the moſt powerful barons on each ſide ſwore that they would employ their power to enſure the effectual execution of the whole treaty.[d] A ſtrong proof of the great independence and authority of the nobles in thoſe ages!

Prince Henry, diſguſted that ſo little care had been taken of his intereſts in this accommodation, retired to St. Michael's Mount, a ſtrong fortreſs on the coaſt of Normandy, and infeſted the neighbourhood with his incurſions. Robert and William, with their joint forces, beſieged him in this place, and had nearly reduced him by the ſcarcity of water; when the elder, hearing of his diſtreſs, granted him permiſſion to ſupply himſelf, and alſo ſent him ſome pipes of wine for his own table. Being reproved by William for this ill timed generoſity, he replied, 'What, ſhall I ſuffer my brother to die of thirſt? Where ſhall we find another when he is gone?' The king alſo, during this ſiege, performed an act of generoſity which was leſs ſuitable to his character. Riding out one day alone, to take a ſurvey of the fortreſs, he was attacked by two ſoldiers, and diſmounted. One of them drew his ſword in order to diſpatch him; when the king exclaimed, 'Hold, knave! I am the king of England.' The ſoldier ſuſpended his blow; and, raiſing the king from the ground, with expreſſions of reſpect, received a handſome reward, and was

taken into his ſervice. Prince Henry was ſoon after obliged to capitulate; and, being deſpoiled of all his patrimony, wandered about for ſome time with very few attendants, and often in great poverty.

The continued inteſtine diſcord among the barons was alone in that age deſtructive; the public wars were commonly ſhort and feeble, produced little bloodſhed, and were attended with no memorable event. To this Norman war, which was ſo ſoon concluded, there ſucceeded (in 1091) hoſtilities with Scotland, which were not of longer duration. Robert here commanded his brother's army, and obliged Malcolm to accept of peace, and do homage to the crown of England. This peace was not more durable. Malcolm, two years after, levying an army, invaded England; and, after ravaging Northumberland, he laid ſiege to Alnwick, where, a party of earl Moubray's troops falling upon him by ſurpriſe, a ſharp action enſued, in which Malcolm was ſlain. This incident interrupted for ſome years the regular ſucceſſion to the Scottiſh crown. Though Malcolm left legitimate ſons, his brother Donald, on account of the youth of theſe princes, was advanced to the throne; but kept no long poſſeſſion of it. Duncan, natural ſon of Malcolm, formed a conſpiracy againſt him; and, being aſſiſted by William with a ſmall force, made himſelf maſter of the kingdom. New broils enſued with Normandy. The frank, open, remiſs, temper of Robert was ill fitted to withſtand the intereſted rapacious character of William; who, ſupported by greater power, was ſtill encroaching on his brother's poſſeſſions, and inſtigating his turbulent barons to rebellion againſt him. The king, having gone over to Normandy to ſupport his partiſans, ordered an army of twenty thouſand men to be levied in England, and to be conducted to the ſea coaſt, as if they were inſtantly to be embarked. Here Ralph Flambard, the king's miniſter, and the chief inſtrument of his

extortions, exacted ten ſhillings a-piece from them in lieu of their ſervice, and then diſmiſſed them into their ſeveral counties. This money was ſo ſkilfully employed by William, that it rendered him better ſervice than he could have expected from the army. He engaged the French king by new preſents to depart from the protection of Robert; and he daily bribed the Norman barons to deſert his ſervice: but was prevented from puſhing his advantages by an incurſion of the Welſh, which obliged him to return to England. He found no difficulty in repelling the enemy; but was not able to make any conſiderable impreſſion on a country guarded by its mountainous ſituation. A conſpiracy of his own barons, which was detected at this time, appeared a more ſerious concern, and engroſſed all his attention. Robert Moubray, earl of Northumberland, was at the head of this combination; and he engaged in it the count d'Eu, Richard de Tunbridge, Roger de Lacey, and many others. The purpoſe of the conſpirators was to dethrone the king, and to advance in his ſtead Stephen, count of Aumale, nephew to the Conqueror. William's diſpatch prevented the deſign from taking effect, and diſconcerted the conſpirators. Moubray made ſome reſiſtance; but, being taken priſoner, was attainted, and thrown into confinement, where he died about thirty years after. The count d'Eu denied his concurrence in the plot; and, to juſtify himſelf, fought, in the preſence of the court at Windſor, a duel with Geoffrey Bainard, who accuſed him: but, being worſted in the combat, he was condemned to be caſtrated, and to have his eyes put out. William de Alderi, another conſpirator, was ſuppoſed to be treated with more rigour when he was ſentenced to be hanged.

But the noiſe of theſe petty wars and commotions was quite ſunk in the tumult of the cruſades, which now engroſſed the attention of Europe, and have ever ſince engaged the curioſity of mankind, as the moſt ſignal and moſt durable monument of human folly that has yet appeared in any age or nation. After Mahomet had, by means of his pretended revelations, united the diſperſed Arabians under one head, they iſſued forth from their deſerts in great multitudes; and, being animated with zeal for their new religion, and ſupported by the vigour of their new government, they made deep impreſſion on the eaſtern empire, which was far in the decline, with regard both to military diſcipline and to civil policy. Jeruſalem, by its ſituation, became one of their moſt early conqueſts; and the Chriſtians had the mortification to ſee the holy ſepulchre, and the other places, conſecrated by the preſence of their religious founder, fallen into the poſſeſſion of infidels. But the Arabians or Saracens were ſo employed in military enterpriſes, by which they ſpread their empire in a few years from the banks of the Ganges to the Streights of Gibraltar, that they had no leiſure for theological controverſy: and, though the Alcoran, the original monument of their faith, ſeems to contain ſome violent precepts, they were much leſs infected with the ſpirit of bigotry and perſecution than the indolent and ſpeculative Greeks, who were continually refining on the ſeveral articles of their religious ſyſtem. They gave little diſturbance to thoſe zealous pilgrims who daily flocked to Jeruſalem; and they allowed every man, after paying a moderate tribute, to viſit the holy ſepulchre, to perform his religious duties, and to return in peace. But the Turcomans or Turks, a tribe of Tartars who had embraced Mahometaniſm, having wreſted

Syria from the Saracens, and having, in the year 1065, made themſelves maſters of Jeruſalem, rendered the pilgrimage much more difficult and dangerous to the Chriſtians. The barbarity of their manners, and the confuſions attending their unſettled government, expoſed the pilgrims to many inſults, robberies, and extortions: and theſe zealots, returning from their meritorious fatigues and ſufferings, filled all Chriſtendom with indignation againſt the infidels, who profaned the holy city by their preſence, and derided the ſacred myſteries in the very place of their completion. Gregory VII. among the other vaſt ideas which he entertained, had formed the deſign of uniting all the weſtern Chriſtians againſt the Mahometans: but the egregious and violent invaſions of that pontiff on the civil power of princes had created him ſo many enemies, and had rendered his ſchemes ſo ſuſpicious, that he was not able to make great progreſs in this undertaking. The work was reſerved for a meaner inſtrument; whoſe low condition in life expoſed him to no jealouſy, and whoſe folly was well calculated to coincide with the prevailing principles of the times.

Peter, commonly called the Hermit, a native of Amiens in Picardy, had made the pilgrimage to Jeruſalem. Being deeply affected with the dangers to which that act of piety now expoſed the pilgrims, as well as with the inſtances of oppreſſion under which the eaſtern Chriſtians laboured, he entertained the bold, and in all appearance impracticable, project of leading into Aſia, from the fartheſt extremities of the Weſt, armies ſufficient to ſubdue thoſe potent and warlike nations which now held the holy city in ſubjection.[e] He propoſed his views to Martin II. who filled the papal chair; and who, though ſenſible of the advantages which the head of the Chriſtian religion muſt reap from a religious war, and though he eſteemed the blind zeal of Peter a proper means for effecting the purpoſe,[f] reſolved not to

interpoſe his authority till he ſaw a greater probability of ſucceſs. He ſummoned a council at Placentia, which conſiſted of four thouſand eccleſiaſtics and thirty thouſand ſeculars; and which was ſo numerous that no hall could contain the multitude, and it was neceſſary to hold the aſſembly in a plain. The harangues of the pope, and of Peter himſelf, repreſenting the diſmal ſituation of their brethren in the eaſt, and the indignity ſuffered by the Chriſtian name, in allowing the holy city to remain in the hands of infidels, here found the minds of men ſo well prepared, that the whole multitude ſuddenly and violently declared for the war, and ſolemnly devoted themſelves to perform this ſervice, ſo meritorious, as they believed it, to God and religion.

But, though Italy ſeemed thus to have zealouſly embraced the enterpriſe, Martin knew that, in order to enſure ſucceſs, it was neceſſary to inliſt the greater and more warlike nations in the ſame engagement; and, having previouſly exhorted Peter to viſit the chief cities and ſovereigns of Chriſtendom, he ſummoned another council at Clermont in Auvergne.[g] The fame of this great and pious deſign, being now univerſally diffuſed, procured the attendance of the greateſt prelates, nobles, and princes; and, when the pope and the hermit renewed their pathetic exhortations, the whole aſſembly, as if impelled by an immediate inſpiration, not moved by their preceding impreſſions, exclaimed with one voice, 'It is the will of God, It is the will of God!' Words deemed ſo memorable, and ſo much the reſult of a divine influence, that they were employed as the ſignal of rendezvous and battle in all the future exploits of thoſe adventurers.[h] Men of all ranks flew to arms with the utmoſt ardour; and an exterior ſymbol too, a circumſtance of chief moment, was here choſen by the devoted combatants. The ſign of the croſs, which had been hitherto ſo much revered among Chriſtians, and

which, the more it was an object of reproach among the Pagan world, was the more paſſionately cheriſhed by them, became the badge of union, and was affixed to their right ſhoulder by all who inliſted themſelves in this ſacred warfare.[j]

Europe was at this time ſunk into profound ignorance and ſuperſtition: the eccleſiaſtics had acquired the greateſt aſcendant over the human mind; the people, who, being little reſtrained by honour, and leſs by law, abandoned themſelves to the worſt crimes and diſorders, knew of no other expiation than the obſervances impoſed on them by their ſpiritual paſtors; and it was eaſy to repreſent the holy war as an equivalent for all [k]penances, and an atonement for every violation of juſtice and humanity. But, amidſt the abject ſuperſtition which now prevailed, the military ſpirit alſo had univerſally diffuſed itſelf; and, though not ſupported by art or diſcipline, was become the general paſſion of the nations governed by the feudal law. All the great lords poſſeſſed the right of peace and war; they were engaged in perpetual hoſtilities with each other; the open country was become a ſcene of outrage and diſorder; the cities, ſtill mean and poor, were neither guarded by walls nor protected by privileges, and were expoſed to every inſult; individuals were obliged to depend for ſafety on their own force, or their private alliances; and valour was the only excellence which was held in eſteem, or gave one man the pre-eminence above another. When all the particular ſuperſtitions, therefore, were here united in one great object, the ardour for military enterpriſes took the ſame direction; and Europe, impelled by its two ruling paſſions, was looſened, as it were, from its foundations, and ſeemed to precipitate itſelf in one united body upon the eaſt.

All orders of men, deeming the cruſades the only road to heaven, inliſted themſelves under theſe ſacred banners, and were impatient to open the way with their ſword to the holy city.

Nobles, artiſans, peaſants, even prieſts,[l] enrolled their names; and to decline this meritorious ſervice was branded with the reproach of impiety, or (what perhaps was eſteemed ſtill more diſgraceful) of cowardice and puſillanimity.[m] The infirm and aged contributed to the expedition by preſents and money; and many of them, not ſatisfied with the merit of this atonement, attended it in perſon, and were determined, if poſſible, to breathe their laſt in ſight of that city where their Saviour had died for them. Women themſelves, concealing their ſex under the diſguiſe of armour, attended the camp; and commonly forgot ſtill more the duty of the ſex, by proſtituting themſelves, without reſerve, to the army.[n] The greateſt criminals were forward in a ſervice which they regarded as a propitiation for all crimes; and the moſt enormous diſorders were, during the courſe of thoſe expeditions, committed by men inured to wickedneſs, encouraged by example, and impelled by neceſſity. The multitude of the adventurers ſoon became ſo great, that their more ſagacious leaders, Hugh count of Vermandois, brother to the French king, Raymond count of Toulouſe, Godfrey of Bouillon, prince of Brabant, and Stephen count of Blois,[o] became apprehenſive leſt the greatneſs itſelf of the armament ſhould diſappoint its purpoſe; and they permitted an undiſciplined multitude, computed at three hundred thouſand men, to go before them, under the command of Peter the Hermit and Walter[p] the Moneyleſs. Theſe men took the road towards Conſtantinople through Hungary and Bulgaria; and, truſting that Heaven by ſupernatural aſſiſtance would ſupply all their neceſſities, they made no proviſion for ſubſiſtence on their march. They ſoon found themſelves obliged to obtain by plunder what they had vainly expected from miracles; and the enraged inhabitants of the countries through which they paſſed, gathering together in arms, attacked the diſorderly multitude, and put them to ſlaughter without re-

ſiſtance. The more diſciplined armies followed after; and, paſſing the ſtreights at Conſtantinople, they were muſtered in the plains of Aſia, and amounted in the whole to the number of ſeven hundred thouſand combatants.[q]

Amidſt this univerſal frenzy, which ſpread itſelf by contagion throughout Europe, eſpecially in France and Germany, men were not entirely forgetful of their preſent intereſts; and both thoſe who went on this expedition, and thoſe who ſtayed behind, entertained ſchemes of gratifying, by its means, their avarice or their ambition. The nobles who inliſted themſelves were moved, from the romantic ſpirit of the age, to hope for opulent eſtabliſhments in the eaſt, the chief ſeat of arts and commerce during thoſe ages; and, in purſuit of theſe chimerical projects, they ſold at the loweſt price their ancient caſtles and inheritances, which had now loſt all value in their eyes. The greater princes, who remained at home, beſides eſtabliſhing peace in their dominions by giving occupation abroad to the inquietude and martial diſpoſition of their ſubjects, took the opportunity of annexing to their crown many conſiderable fiefs, either by purchaſe or by the extinction of heirs. The pope frequently turned the zeal of the cruſades from the infidels againſt his own enemies, whom he repreſented as equally criminal with the enemies of Chriſt. The convents and other religious ſocieties bought the poſſeſſions of the adventurers; and, as the contributions of the faithful were commonly intruſted to their management, they often diverted to this purpoſe what was intended to be employed againſt the infidels.[r] But no one was a more immediate gainer by this epidemic fury than the king of England, who kept aloof from all connexions with thoſe fanatical and romantic warriors.

ACQUISITION OF NORMANDY.

ROBERT duke of Normandy, impelled by the bravery and miſtaken generoſity of his ſpirit, had early inliſted himſelf in the cruſade; but, being always unprovided with money, he found that it would be impracticable for him to appear in a manner ſuitable to his rank and ſtation at the head of his numerous vaſſals and ſubjects, who, tranſported with the general rage, were determined to follow him into Aſia. He reſolved, therefore, to mortgage, or rather to ſell, his dominions, which he had not talents to govern; and he offered them to his brother William for the very unequal ſum of ten thouſand marks.[s] The bargain was ſoon concluded. The king raiſed the money by violent extortions on his ſubjects of all ranks, even on the convents, who were obliged to melt their plate in order to furniſh the quota demanded of them;[t] he was put in poſſeſſion of Normandy and Maine; and Robert, providing himſelf with a magnificent train, ſet out for the holy land, in purſuit of glory, and in full confidence of ſecuring his eternal ſalvation.

The ſmallneſs of this ſum, with the difficulties which William found in raiſing it, ſuffices alone to refute the account, which is heedleſsly adopted by hiſtorians, of the enormous revenue of the Conqueror. Is it credible that Robert would conſign to the rapacious hands of his brother ſuch conſiderable dominions, for a ſum which, according to that account, made not a week's income of his father's Engliſh revenue alone? Or that the king of England could not on demand, without oppreſſing his ſubjects, have been able to pay him the money? The Conqueror, it is agreed, was frugal as well as rapacious; yet his treaſure at his death exceeded not ſixty thouſand pounds, which hardly amounted to his income for two

months; another certain refutation of that exaggerated account.

The fury of the cruſades, during this age, leſs infected England than the neighbouring kingdoms; probably becauſe the Norman conquerors, finding their ſettlement in that kingdom ſtill ſomewhat precarious, durſt not abandon their homes in queſt of diſtant adventures. The ſelfiſh intereſted ſpirit alſo of the king, which kept him from kindling in the general flame, checked its progreſs among his ſubjects; and, as he is accuſed of open profaneneſs,[u] and was endued with a ſharp wit,[w] it is likely that he made the romantic chivalry of the cruſades the object of his perpetual raillery. As an inſtance of his irreligion, we are told that he once accepted of ſixty marks from a Jew, whoſe ſon had been converted to Chriſtianity, and who engaged him by that preſent to aſſiſt him in bringing back the youth to Judaiſm. William employed both menaces and perſuaſion for that purpoſe: but, finding the convert obſtinate in his new faith, he ſent for the father, and told him that, as he had not ſucceeded, it was not juſt that he ſhould keep the preſent; but, as he had done his utmoſt, it was but equitable that he ſhould be paid for his pains; and he would therefore retain only thirty marks of the money.[x] At another time, it is ſaid, he ſent for ſome learned Chriſtian theologians and ſome rabbies, and bade them fairly diſpute the queſtion of their religion in his preſence: he was perfectly indifferent between them; had his ears open to reaſon and conviction; and would embrace that doctrine which upon compariſon ſhould be found ſupported by the moſt ſolid arguments.[y] If this ſtory be true, it is probable that he meant only to amuſe himſelf by turning both into ridicule. But we muſt be cautious of admitting every thing related by the monkiſh hiſtorians to the diſadvantage of this prince: he had the misfortune to be engaged in quarrels with the eccleſiaſtics, particularly with

Anſelm, commonly called St. Anſelm, archbiſhop of Canterbury; and it is no wonder his memory ſhould be blackened by the hiſtorians of that order.

QUARREL WITH ANSELM THE PRIMATE.

After the death of Lanfranc, the king for ſeveral years retained in his own hands the revenues of Canterbury, as he did thoſe of many other vacant biſhoprics: but, falling into a dangerous ſickneſs, he was ſeized with remorſe; and the clergy repreſented to him that he was in danger of eternal perdition, if before his death he did not make atonement for thoſe multiplied impieties and ſacrileges of which he had been guilty.[z] He reſolved, therefore, to ſupply inſtantly the vacancy of Canterbury; and for that purpoſe he ſent for Anſelm, a Piedmonteſe by birth, abbot of Bec in Normandy, who was much celebrated for his learning and piety. The abbot earneſtly refuſed the dignity, fell on his knees, wept, and entreated the king to change his purpoſe;[a] and, when he found the prince obſtinate in forcing the paſtoral ſtaff upon him, he kept his fiſt ſo faſt clenched that it required the utmoſt violence of the byſtanders to open it, and force him to receive that enſign of ſpiritual dignity.[b] William ſoon after recovered; and, his paſſions regaining their wonted vigour, he returned to his former violence and rapine. He detained in priſon ſeveral perſons whom he had ordered to be freed during the time of his penitence; he ſtill preyed upon the eccleſiaſtical benefices; the ſale of ſpiritual dignities continued as open as ever; and he kept poſſeſſion of a conſiderable part of the revenues belonging to the ſee of Canterbury.[c] But he found in Anſelm that perſevering oppoſition, which he had reaſon to expect from the oſtentatious humility which that prelate had diſplayed in refuſing his promotion.

The oppoſition made by Anſelm was the more dangerous on account of the character of piety which he ſoon acquired in England, by his great zeal againſt all abuſes, particularly thoſe in dreſs and ornament. There was a mode, which in that age prevailed throughout Europe both among men and women, to give an enormous length to their ſhoes, to draw the toe to a ſharp point, and to affix to it the figure of a bird's bill, or ſome ſuch ornament, which was turned upwards, and which was often ſuſtained by gold or ſilver chains tied to the knee.[a] The eccleſiaſtics took exception at this ornament, which they ſaid was an attempt to belie the ſcripture, where it is affirmed that no man can add a cubit to his ſtature; and they declaimed againſt it with great vehemence; nay, aſſembled ſome ſynods, who abſolutely condemned it. But, (ſuch are the ſtrange contradictions in human nature!) though the clergy at that time could overturn thrones, and had authority ſufficient to ſend above a million of men on their errand to the deſerts of Aſia, they could never prevail againſt theſe long pointed ſhoes: on the contrary, that caprice, contrary to all other modes, maintained its ground during ſeveral centuries; and, if the clergy had not at laſt deſiſted from their perſecution of it, it might ſtill have been the prevailing faſhion in Europe.

But Anſelm was more fortunate in decrying the particular mode which was the object of his averſion, and which probably had not taken ſuch faſt hold of the affections of the people. He preached zealouſly againſt the long hair and curled locks which were then faſhionable among the courtiers; he refuſed the aſhes on Aſh Wedneſday to thoſe who were ſo accoutred; and his authority and eloquence had ſuch influence, that the young men univerſally abandoned that ornament, and appeared in the cropt hair which was recommended to them by the ſermons of the primate. The noted hiſtorian of Anſelm, who was alſo his com-

panion and ſecretary, celebrates highly this effort of his zeal and piety.[e]

When William's profaneneſs, therefore, returned to him with his health, he was ſoon engaged in controverſies with this auſtere prelate. There was at that time a ſchiſm in the church between Urban and Clement, who both pretended to the papacy;[f] and Anſelm, who, as abbot of Bec, had already acknowledged the former, was determined, without the king's conſent, to introduce his authority into England.[g] William, who, imitating his father's example, had prohibited his ſubjects from recognizing any pope whom he had not previouſly received, was enraged at this attempt; and ſummoned a ſynod at Rockingham, with an intention of depoſing Anſelm: but the prelate's ſuffragans declared that, without the papal authority, they knew of no expedient for inflicting that puniſhment on their primate.[h] The king was at laſt engaged by other motives to give the preference to Urban's title; Anſelm received the pall from that pontiff; and matters ſeemed to be accommodated between the king and the primate,[i] when the quarrel broke out afreſh from a new cauſe. William had undertaken an expedition againſt Wales, and required the archbiſhop to furniſh his quota of ſoldiers for that ſervice; but Anſelm, who regarded the demand as an oppreſſion on the church, and yet durſt not refuſe compliance, ſent them ſo miſerably accoutred, that the king was extremely diſpleaſed, and threatened him with a proſecution.[k] Anſelm, on the other hand, demanded poſitively that all the revenues of his ſee ſhould be reſtored to him; appealed to Rome againſt the king's injuſtice;[l] and affairs came to ſuch extremities, that the primate, finding it dangerous to remain in the kingdom, deſired and obtained the king's permiſſion to retire beyond ſea. All his temporalities were ſeized;[m] but he was received with great reſpect by Urban, who conſidered him as a martyr in the cauſe of reli-

gion, and even menaced the king, on account of his proceedings againſt the primate and the church, with the ſentence of excommunication. Anſelm aſſiſted at the council of Bari; where, beſides fixing the controverſy between the Greek and Latin churches concerning the proceſſion of the Holy Ghoſt,[n] the right of election to church preferments was declared to belong to the clergy alone; and ſpiritual cenſures were denounced againſt all eccleſiaſtics who did homage to laymen for their fees or benefices, and againſt all laymen who exacted it.[o] The rite of homage, by the feudal cuſtoms, was, that the vaſſal ſhould throw himſelf on his knees, ſhould put his joined hands between thoſe of his ſuperior, and ſhould in that poſture ſwear fealty to[p] him. But the council declared it execrable that pure hands, which could create God, and could offer him up as a ſacrifice for the ſalvation of mankind, ſhould be put, after this humiliating manner, between profane hands; which, beſides being inured to rapine and bloodſhed, were employed day and night in impure purpoſes and obſcene contacts.[q] Such were the reaſonings prevalent in that age; reaſonings which, though they cannot be paſſed over in ſilence without omitting the moſt curious, and perhaps not the leaſt inſtructive, part of hiſtory, can ſcarcely be delivered with the requiſite decency and gravity.

The ceſſion of Normandy and Maine by duke Robert increaſed the king's territories; but brought him no great increaſe of power, becauſe of the unſettled ſtate of thoſe countries, the mutinous diſpoſition of the barons, and the vicinity of the French king, who ſupported them in all their inſurrections. Even Helie, lord of la Fleche, a ſmall town in Anjou, was able to give him inquietude; and this great monarch was obliged to make ſeveral expeditions abroad without being able to prevail over ſo petty a baron, who had acquired the confidence and affections of the inhabitants of Maine. He was, however, ſo fortunate as at laſt

to take him priſoner in a rencounter; but, having releaſed him at the interceſſion of the French king and the count of Anjou, he found the province of Maine ſtill expoſed to his intrigues and incurſions. Helie, being introduced by the citizens into the town of Mans, beſieged the garriſon in the citadel. William, who was hunting in the new foreſt when he received intelligence of this hoſtile attempt, was ſo provoked, that he immediately turned his horſe, and galloped to the ſea ſhore at Dartmouth; declaring that he would not ſtop a moment till he had taken vengeance for the offence. He found the weather ſo cloudy and tempeſtuous that the mariners thought it dangerous to put to ſea: but the king hurried on board, and ordered them to ſet ſail inſtantly; telling them that they never yet heard of a king that was drowned.[r] By this vigour and celerity he delivered the citadel of Mans from its preſent danger; and, purſuing Helie into his own territories, he laid ſiege to Majol, a ſmall caſtle in thoſe parts: but a wound, which he received before this place, obliged him to raiſe the ſiege; and he returned to England.

DEATH AND CHARACTER OF RUFUS. 1100.

The weakneſs of the greateſt monarchs, during this age, in their military expeditions againſt their neareſt neighbours, appears the more ſurpriſing, when we conſider the prodigious numbers which even petty princes, ſeconding the enthuſiaſtic rage of the people, were able to aſſemble, and to conduct in dangerous enterpriſes to the remote provinces of Aſia. William, earl of Poitiers and duke of Guienne, inflamed with the glory, and not diſcouraged by the misfortunes, which had attended the former adventurers in the cruſades, had put himſelf at the head of an immenſe multitude, computed by ſome hiſtorians to amount to

ſixty thouſand horſe, and a much greater number of foot;[s] and he purpoſed to lead them into the holy land againſt the infidels. He wanted money to forward the preparations requiſite for this expedition; and he offered to mortgage all his dominions to William, without entertaining any ſcruple on account of that rapacious and iniquitous hand to which he reſolved to conſign them.' The king accepted the offer; and had prepared a fleet and an army, in order to eſcort the money, and take poſſeſſion of the rich provinces of Guienne and Poictou; when an accident put an end to his life, and to all his ambitious projects, on the ſecond of Auguſt, 1100. He was engaged in hunting, the ſole amuſement, and indeed the chief occupation, of princes in thoſe rude times; when ſociety was little cultivated, and the arts afforded few objects worthy of attention. Walter Tyrrel, a French gentleman, remarkable for his addreſs in archery, attended him in this recreation, of which the new foreſt was the ſcene; and, as William had diſmounted after a chaſe, Tyrrel, impatient to ſhew his dexterity, let fly an arrow at a ſtag which ſuddenly ſtarted before him. The arrow, glancing from a tree, ſtruck the king in the breaſt, and inſtantly ſlew him:[a] while Tyrrel, without informing any one of the accident, put ſpurs to his horſe, haſtened to the ſea ſhore, embarked for France, and joined the cruſade in an expedition to Jeruſalem; a penance which he impoſed on himſelf for this involuntary crime. The body of William was found in the foreſt by the country people, and was buried without any pomp or ceremony at Wincheſter. His courtiers were negligent in performing the laſt duties to a maſter who was ſo little beloved; and every one was too much occupied, in the intereſting object of fixing his ſucceſſor, to attend the funeral of a dead ſovereign.

The memory of this monarch is tranſmitted to us with little advantage by the churchmen, whom he had offended; and,

though we may ſuſpect, in general, that their account of his vices is ſomewhat exaggerated, his conduct affords little reaſon for contradicting the character which they have aſſigned him, or for attributing to him any very eſtimable qualities. He ſeems to have been a violent and tyrannical prince; a perfidious, encroaching, and dangerous neighbour; an unkind and ungenerous relation. He was equally prodigal and rapacious in the management of his treaſury; and, if he poſſeſſed abilities, he lay ſo much under the government of impetuous paſſions, that he made little uſe of them in his adminiſtration; and he indulged, without reſerve, that domineering policy which ſuited his temper, and which, if ſupported, as it was in him, with courage and vigour, proves often more ſucceſsful in diſorderly times than the deepeſt foreſight and moſt refined artifice.

The monuments which remain of this prince, in England, are the Tower, Weſtminſter hall, and London bridge, which he built. The moſt laudable foreign enterpriſe which he undertook was the ſending of Edgar Atheling, three years before his death, into Scotland with a ſmall army, to reſtore prince Edgar, the true heir of that kingdom, ſon of Malcolm and of Margaret, ſiſter of Edgar Atheling; and the enterpriſe proved ſucceſsful. It was remarked in that age that Richard, an elder brother of William's, periſhed by an accident in the new foreſt; Richard, his nephew, natural ſon of duke Robert, loſt his life in the ſame place, after the ſame manner; and all men, upon the king's fate, exclaimed that, as the Conqueror had been guilty of extreme violence, impelling all the inhabitants of that large diſtrict to make room for his game, the juſt vengeance of Heaven was ſignalized, in the ſame place, by the ſlaughter of his poſterity. William was killed in the thirteenth year of his reign, and about the fortieth of his age. As he was never married, he left no legitimate iſſue.

In the eleventh year of this reign, Magnus, king of Norway, made a deſcent on the iſle of Angleſea; but was repulſed by Hugh earl of Shrewſbury. This is the laſt attempt made by the northern nations upon England. That reſtleſs people ſeem about this time to have learned the practice of tillage, which thenceforth kept them at home, and freed the other nations of Europe from the devaſtations ſpread over them by thoſe piratical invaders. This proved one great cauſe of the ſubſequent ſettlement and improvement of the ſouthern nations.

CHAP. VI.

HENRY I.

THE CRUSADES: ACCESSION OF HENRY: MARRIAGE OF THE KING: INVASION BY DUKE ROBERT: ATTACK OF NORMANDY: CONQUEST OF NORMANDY: WARS ABROAD: DEATH OF PRINCE WILLIAM: KING'S SECOND MARRIAGE: DEATH AND CHARACTER OF HENRY.

CHAPTER VI.

HENRY I.

1100....1135.

THE CRUSADES....ACCESSION OF HENRY....MARRIAGE OF THE KING ....INVASION BY DUKE ROBERT....ACCOMMODATION WITH ROBERT....CONQUEST OF NORMANDY....QUARREL WITH ANSELM RENEWED....COMPROMISE WITH HIM....WARS ABROAD....DEATH OF PRINCE WILLIAM....KING'S SECOND MARRIAGE....DEATH AND CHARACTER OF HENRY.

THE CRUSADES.

AFTER the adventurers in the holy war were aſſembled on the banks of the Boſphorus, oppoſite to Conſtantinople, they proceeded on their enterpriſe; but immediately experienced thoſe difficulties which their zeal had hitherto concealed from them, and for which, even if they had foreſeen them, it would have been almoſt impoſſible to provide a remedy. The Greek emperor Alexis Comnenus, who had applied to the weſtern Chriſtians for ſuccour againſt the Turks, entertained hopes, and thoſe but feeble ones, of obtaining ſuch a moderate ſupply as, acting under his command, might enable him to repulſe the enemy:

but he was extremely aſtoniſhed to ſee his dominions overwhelmed on a ſudden by ſuch an inundation of licentious barbarians; who, though they pretended friendſhip, deſpiſed his ſubjects as unwarlike, and deteſted them as heretical. By all the arts of policy, in which he excelled, he endeavoured to divert the torrent: but, while he employed profeſſions, careſſes, civilities, and ſeeming ſervices, towards the leaders of the cruſade, he ſecretly regarded thoſe imperious allies as more dangerous than the open enemies by whom his empire had been formerly invaded. Having effected that difficult point of diſembarking them ſafely in Aſia, he entered into a private correſpondence with Soliman, emperor of the Turks; and practiſed every inſidious art, which his genius, his power, or his ſituation, enabled him to employ, for diſappointing the enterpriſe, and diſcouraging the Latins from making thenceforward any ſuch prodigious migrations. His dangerous policy was ſeconded by the diſorders inſeparable from ſo vaſt a multitude; who were not united under one head, and were conducted by leaders of the moſt independent intractable ſpirit, unacquainted with military diſcipline, and determined enemies to civil authority and ſubmiſſion. The ſcarcity of proviſions, the exceſſes of fatigue, the influence of unknown climates, joined to the want of concert in their operations, and to the ſword of a warlike enemy, deſtroyed the adventurers by thouſands, and would have abated the ardour of men impelled to war by leſs powerful motives. Their zeal, however, their bravery, and their irreſiſtible force, ſtill carried them forward, and continually advanced them to the great end of their enterpriſe. After an obſtinate ſiege, they took Nice, the ſeat of the Turkiſh empire; they defeated Soliman in two great battles; they made themſelves maſters of Antioch; and entirely broke the force of the Turks, who had ſo long retained thoſe countries in ſubjection. The ſoldan of Egypt,

whoſe alliance they had hitherto courted, recovered, on the fall of the Turkiſh power, his former authority in Jeruſalem; and he informed them, by his ambaſſadors, that, if they came diſarmed to that city, they might now perform their religious vows; and that all Chriſtian pilgrims, who ſhould thenceforth viſit the holy ſepulchre, might expect the ſame good treatment which they had ever received from his predeceſſors. The offer was rejected; the ſoldan was required to yield up the city to the Chriſtians; and, on his refuſal, the champions of the croſs advanced to the ſiege of Jeruſalem, which they regarded as the conſummation of their labours. By the detachments which they had made, and the diſaſters which they had undergone, they were diminiſhed to the number of twenty thouſand foot and fifteen hundred horſe; but theſe were ſtill formidable, from their valour, their experience, and the obedience which, from paſt calamities, they had learned to pay to their leaders. After a ſiege of five weeks, they took Jeruſalem by aſſault; and, impelled by a mixture of military and religious rage, they put the numerous garriſon and inhabitants to the ſword without diſtinction. Neither arms defended the valiant, nor ſubmiſſion the timorous; no age or ſex was ſpared; infants on the breaſt were pierced by the ſame blow with their mothers, who implored for mercy; even a multitude, to the number of ten thouſand perſons, who had ſurrendered themſelves priſoners, and were promiſed quarter, were butchered in cool blood by thoſe ferocious conquerors.[w] The ſtreets of Jeruſalem were covered with dead bodies;[x] and the triumphant warriors, after every enemy was ſubdued and ſlaughtered, immediately turned themſelves, with the ſentiments of humiliation and contrition, towards the holy ſepulchre. They threw aſide their arms, ſtill ſtreaming with blood; they advanced with reclined bodies, and naked feet and heads, to that ſacred monument; they ſung anthems to their

Saviour, who had there purchaſed their ſalvation by his death and agony; and their devotion, enlivened by the preſence of the place where he had ſuffered, ſo overcame their fury, that they diſſolved in tears, and bore the appearance of every ſoft and tender ſentiment. So inconſiſtent is human nature with itſelf! And ſo eaſily does the moſt effeminate ſuperſtition ally both with the moſt heroic courage and with the fierceſt barbarity!

This great event happened on the fifth of July in the laſt year of the eleventh century. The Chriſtian princes and nobles, after chooſing Godfrey of Bouillon king of Jeruſalem, began to ſettle themſelves in their new conqueſts; while ſome of them returned to Europe, in order to enjoy at home that glory which their valour had acquired them in this popular and meritorious enterpriſe. Among theſe was Robert duke of Normandy; who, as he had relinquiſhed the greateſt dominions of any prince that attended the cruſade, had all along diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the moſt intrepid courage, as well as by that affable diſpoſition and unbounded generoſity which gain the hearts of ſoldiers, and qualify a prince to ſhine in a military life. In paſſing through Italy he became acquainted with Sibylla, daughter of the count of Converſana, a young lady of great beauty and merit, whom he eſpouſed. Indulging himſelf in this new paſſion, as well as fond of enjoying eaſe and pleaſure after the fatigues of ſo many rough campaigns, he lingered a twelvemonth in that delicious climate; and, though his friends in the north looked every moment for his arrival, none of them knew when they could with certainty expect it. By this delay he loſt the kingdom of England; which the great fame he had acquired during the cruſades, as well as his undoubted title, both by birth and by the preceding agreement with his deceaſed brother, would, had he been preſent, have infallibly ſecured to him.

ACCESSION OF HENRY. 1100.

PRINCE Henry was hunting with Rufus in the new foreſt when intelligence of that monarch's death was brought him; and, being ſenſible of the advantage attending the conjuncture, he hurried to Wincheſter, in order to ſecure the royal treaſure, which he knew to be a neceſſary implement for facilitating his deſigns on the crown. He had ſcarcely reached the place when William de Breteuil, keeper of the treaſure, arrived, and oppoſed himſelf to Henry's pretenſions. This nobleman, who had been engaged in the ſame party of hunting, had no ſooner heard of his maſter's death than he haſtened to take care of his charge; and he told the prince that this treaſure, as well as the crown, belonged to his elder brother, who was now his ſovereign; and that he himſelf, for his part, was determined, in ſpite of all other pretenſions, to maintain his allegiance to him. But Henry, drawing his ſword, threatened him with inſtant death if he dared to diſobey him; and, as others of the late king's retinue, who came every moment to Wincheſter, joined the prince's party, Breteuil was obliged to withdraw his oppoſition, and to acquieſce in this violence.[y]

Henry, without loſing a moment, haſtened with the money to London; and, having aſſembled ſome noblemen and prelates, whom his addreſs, or abilities, or preſents, gained to his ſide, he was ſuddenly elected, or rather ſaluted, king; and immediately proceeded to the exerciſe of royal authority. In leſs than three days after his brother's death the ceremony of his coronation was performed by Maurice biſhop of London, who was perſuaded to officiate on that occaſion:[z] and thus, by his courage and celerity, he intruded himſelf into the vacant throne. No one had ſufficient ſpirit or ſenſe of duty to appear in de-

fence of the abſent prince; all men were ſeduced or intimidated: preſent poſſeſſion ſupplied the apparent defects in Henry's title, which was indeed founded on plain uſurpation; and the barons, as well as the people, acquieſced in a claim which, though it could neither be juſtified nor comprehended, could now, they found, be oppoſed through the perils alone of civil war and rebellion.

But, as Henry foreſaw that a crown, uſurped againſt all rules of juſtice, would ſit unſteady on his head, he reſolved, by fair profeſſions at leaſt, to gain the affections of all his ſubjects. Beſides taking the uſual coronation oath to maintain the laws and execute juſtice, he paſſed a charter, which was calculated to remedy many of the grievous oppreſſions which had been complained of during the reigns of his father and brother.[a] He there promiſed that, at the death of any biſhop or abbot, he never would ſeize the revenues of the ſee or abbey during the vacancy, but would leave the whole to be reaped by the ſucceſſor; and that he would never let to farm any eccleſiaſtical benefice, nor diſpoſe of it for money. After this conceſſion to the church, whoſe favour was of ſo great importance, he proceeded to enumerate the civil grievances which he purpoſed to redreſs. He promiſed that, upon the death of any earl, baron, or military tenant, his heir ſhould be admitted to the poſſeſſion of his eſtate on paying a juſt and lawful relief, without being expoſed to ſuch violent exactions as had been uſual during the late reigns: he remitted the wardſhip of minors, and allowed guardians to be appointed, who ſhould be anſwerable for the truſt: he promiſed not to diſpoſe of any heireſs in marriage but by the advice of all the barons; and, if any baron intended to give his daughter, ſiſter, niece, or kinſwoman in marriage, it ſhould only be neceſſary for him to conſult the king, who promiſed to take no money for his conſent, nor ever to refuſe per-

miſſion, unleſs the perſon, to whom it was purpoſed to marry her, ſhould happen to be his enemy: he granted his barons and military tenants the power of bequeathing by will their money or perſonal eſtates; and, if they neglected to make a will, he promiſed that their heirs ſhould ſucceed to them: he renounced the right of impoſing moneyage, and of levying taxes at pleaſure on the farms which the barons retained in their own [b] hands: he made ſome general profeſſions of moderating fines; he offered a pardon for all offences; and he remitted all debts due to the crown: he required that the vaſſals of the barons ſhould enjoy the ſame privileges which he granted to his own barons; and he promiſed a general confirmation and obſervance of the laws of king Edward. This is the ſubſtance of the chief articles contained in that famous charter.[c]

To give greater authenticity to theſe conceſſions, Henry lodged a copy of his charter in ſome abbey of each county; as if deſirous that it ſhould be expoſed to the view of all his ſubjects, and remain a perpetual rule for the limitation and direction of his government. Yet it is certain that, after the preſent purpoſe was ſerved, he never once thought, during his reign, of obſerving one ſingle article of it; and the whole fell ſo much into neglect and oblivion, that, in the following century, when the barons, who had heard an obſcure tradition of it, deſired to make it the model of the great charter which they exacted from king John, they could with difficulty find a copy of it in the kingdom. But, as to the grievances here meant to be redreſſed, they were ſtill continued in their full extent; and the royal authority, in all thoſe particulars, lay under no manner of reſtriction. Reliefs of heirs, ſo capital an article, were never effectually fixed till the time of Magna Charta;[d] and it is evident that the general promiſe here given, of accepting a juſt and lawful relief, ought to have been reduced to more preciſion, in order to give

ſecurity to the ſubject. The oppreſſion of wardſhip and marriage was perpetuated even till the reign of Charles II. And it appears from Glanville,[e] the famous juſticiary of Henry II. that in his time, where any man died inteſtate, (an accident which muſt have been very frequent when the art of writing was ſo little known) the king, or the lord of the fief, pretended to ſeize all the moveables, and to exclude every heir, even the children of the deceaſed: a ſure mark of a tyrannical and arbitrary government.

The Normans, indeed, who domineered in England, were, during this age, ſo licentious a people, that they may be pronounced incapable of any true or regular liberty; which requires ſuch improvement in knowledge and morals as can only be the reſult of reflection and experience, and muſt grow to perfection during ſeveral ages of ſettled and eſtabliſhed government. A people ſo inſenſible to the rights of their ſovereign as to diſjoint, without neceſſity, the hereditary ſucceſſion, and permit a younger brother to intrude himſelf into the place of the elder, whom they eſteemed, and who was guilty of no crime but being abſent, could not expect that that prince would pay any greater regard to their privileges, or allow his engagements to fetter his power, and debar him from any conſiderable intereſt or convenience. They had, indeed, arms in their hands, which prevented the eſtabliſhment of a total deſpotiſm; and left their poſterity ſufficient power, whenever they ſhould attain a ſufficient degree of reaſon, to aſſume true liberty: but their turbulent diſpoſition frequently prompted them to make ſuch uſe of their arms, that they were more fitted to obſtruct the execution of juſtice than to ſtop the career of violence and oppreſſion. The prince, finding that greater oppoſition was often made to him when he enforced the laws than when he violated them, was apt to render his own will and pleaſure the ſole rule of government; and,

on every emergence, to conſider more the power of the perſons whom he might offend than the rights of thoſe whom he might injure. The very form of this charter of Henry proves that the Norman barons (for they, rather than the people of England, were chiefly concerned in it) were totally ignorant of the nature of limited monarchy, and were ill qualified to conduct, in conjunction with their ſovereign, the machine of government. It is an act of his ſole power, is the reſult of his free grace, contains ſome articles which bind others as well as himſelf, and is, therefore, unfit to be the deed of any one who poſſeſſes not the whole legiſlative power, and who may not at pleaſure revoke all his conceſſions.

Henry, farther to increaſe his popularity, degraded and committed to priſon Ralph Flambard, biſhop of Durham, who had been the chief inſtrument of oppreſſion under his brother.[f] But this act was followed by another, which was a direct violation of his own charter, and was a bad prognoſtic of his ſincere intentions to obſerve it: he kept the ſee of Durham vacant for five years, and during that time retained poſſeſſion of all its revenues. Senſible of the great authority which Anſelm had acquired by his character of piety, and by the perſecutions which he had undergone from William, he ſent repeated meſſages to him at Lyons, where he reſided, and invited him to return and take poſſeſſion of his dignities.[g] On the arrival of the prelate he propoſed to him the renewal of that homage which he had done his brother, and which had never been refuſed by any Engliſh biſhop: but Anſelm had acquired other ſentiments by his journey to Rome, and gave the king an abſolute refuſal. He objected the decrees of the council of Bari, at which he himſelf had aſſiſted; and he declared that, ſo far from doing homage for his ſpiritual dignity, he would not ſo much as communicate with any eccleſiaſtic who paid that ſubmiſſion, or who accepted

of inveſtitures from laymen. Henry, who expected, in his preſent delicate ſituation, to reap great advantages from the authority and popularity of Anſelm, durſt not inſiſt on his [h] demand: he only deſired that the controverſy might be ſuſpended; and that meſſengers might be ſent to Rome, in order to accommodate matters with the pope, and obtain his confirmation of the laws and cuſtoms of England.

MARRIAGE OF THE KING.

THERE immediately occurred an important affair, in which the king was obliged to have recourſe to the authority of Anſelm. Matilda, daughter of Malcolm III. king of Scotland, and niece to Edgar Atheling, had, on her father's death, and the ſubſequent revolutions in the Scottiſh government, been brought to England, and educated under her aunt Chriſtina, in the nunnery of Rumſey. This princeſs Henry purpoſed to marry; but, as ſhe had worn the veil, though never taken the vows, doubts might ariſe concerning the lawfulneſs of the act; and it behoved him to be very careful not to ſhock, in any particular, the religious prejudices of his ſubjects. The affair was examined by Anſelm, in a council of the prelates and nobles, which was ſummoned at Lambeth. Matilda there proved that ſhe had put on the veil, not with a view of entering into a religious life, but merely in conſequence of a cuſtom familiar to the Engliſh ladies, who protected their chaſtity from the brutal violence of the Normans by taking ſhelter under that habit,[i] which, amidſt the horrible licentiouſneſs of the times, was yet generally revered. The council, ſenſible that even a princeſs had otherwiſe no ſecurity for her honour, admitted this reaſon as valid; they pronounced that Matilda was ſtill free to marry;[k] and her eſpouſals with Henry were celebrated by Anſelm with great pomp and ſolemnity.[l] No

act of the king's reign rendered him equally popular with his Engliſh ſubjects, and tended more to eſtabliſh him on the throne. Though Matilda, during the life of her uncle and brothers, was not heir of the Saxon line, ſhe was become very dear to the Engliſh on account of her connexions with it. And that people, who before the conqueſt had fallen into a kind of indifference towards their ancient royal family, had felt ſo ſeverely the tyranny of the Normans, that they reflected with extreme regret on their former liberty, and hoped for a more equal and mild adminiſtration when the blood of their native princes ſhould be mingled with that of their new ſovereigns.[m]

INVASION BY DUKE ROBERT. 1101.

But the policy and prudence of Henry, which, if time had been allowed for theſe virtues to produce their full effect, would have ſecured him poſſeſſion of the crown, ran great hazard of being fruſtrated by the ſudden appearance of Robert, who returned to Normandy about a month after the death of his brother William. He took poſſeſſion, without oppoſition, of that duchy; and immediately made preparations for recovering England, of which, during his abſence, he had by Henry's intrigues been ſo unjuſtly defrauded. The great fame which he had acquired in the eaſt forwarded his pretenſions; and the Norman barons, ſenſible of the conſequences, expreſſed the ſame diſcontent at the ſeparation of the duchy and kingdom which had appeared on the acceſſion of William. Robert de Beleſme earl of Shrewſbury and Arundel, William de la Warrenne earl of Surrey, Arnulf de Montgomery, Walter Giffard, Robert de Pontefract, Robert de Mallet, Yvo de Grentmeſnil, and many others of the principal [n] nobility, invited Robert to make an attempt upon England; and promiſed, on his landing, to join him with all their forces. Even the ſea-

men were affected with the general popularity of his name, and they carried over to him the greater part of a fleet which had been equipped to oppoſe his paſſage. Henry, in this extremity, began to be apprehenſive for his life, as well as for his crown; and had recourſe to the ſuperſtition of the people, in order to oppoſe their ſentiment of juſtice. He paid diligent court to Anſelm, whoſe ſanctity and wiſdom he pretended to revere: he conſulted him in all difficult emergencies; ſeemed to be governed by him in every meaſure; promiſed a ſtrict regard to eccleſiaſtical privileges; profeſſed a great attachment to Rome, and a reſolution of perſevering in an implicit obedience to the decrees of councils and to the will of the ſovereign pontiff. By theſe careſſes and declarations he entirely gained the confidence of the primate, whoſe influence over the people, and authority with the barons, were of the utmoſt ſervice to him in his preſent ſituation. Anſelm ſcrupled not to aſſure the nobles of the king's ſincerity, in thoſe profeſſions which he made, of avoiding the tyrannical and oppreſſive government of his father and brother; he even rode through the ranks of the army, recommended to the ſoldiers the defence of their prince, repreſented the duty of keeping their oaths of allegiance, and prognoſticated to them the greateſt happineſs from the government of ſo wiſe and juſt a ſovereign. By this expedient, joined to the influence of the earls of Warwick and Mellent, of Roger Bigod, Richard de Redvers, and Robert Fitz Hammon, powerful barons, who ſtill adhered to the preſent government, the army was retained in the king's intereſts, and marched, with ſeeming union and firmneſs, to oppoſe Robert, who had landed with his forces at Portſmouth.

ACCOMMODATION WITH ROBERT.

THE two armies lay in ſight of each other for ſome days without coming to action; and both princes, being apprehenſive of the event, which would probably be deciſive, hearkened the more willingly to the councils of Anſelm and the other great men, who mediated an accommodation between them. After employing ſome negociation, it was agreed that Robert ſhould reſign his pretenſions to England, and receive in lieu of them an annual penſion of three thouſand marks; that, if either of the princes died without iſſue, the other ſhould ſucceed to his dominions; that the adherents of each ſhould be pardoned, and reſtored to all their poſſeſſions either in Normandy or England; and that neither Robert nor Henry ſhould thenceforth encourage, receive, or protect, the enemies of the other.°

This treaty, though calculated ſo much for Henry's advantage, he was the firſt to violate. He reſtored indeed the eſtates of all Robert's adherents; but was ſecretly determined that noblemen ſo powerful and ſo ill affected, who had both inclination and ability to diſturb his government, ſhould not long remain unmoleſted in their preſent opulence and grandeur. He began with the earl of Shrewſbury, who was watched for ſome time by ſpies, and then indicted on a charge, conſiſting of forty-five articles. This turbulent nobleman, knowing his own guilt, as well as the prejudices of his judges and the power of his proſecutor, had recourſe to arms for defence; but, being ſoon ſuppreſſed by the activity and addreſs of Henry, he was baniſhed the kingdom, and his great eſtate was confiſcated. His ruin involved that of his two brothers, Arnulf de Montgomery and Roger earl of Lancaſter. Soon after followed the proſecution and condemnation of Robert de Pontefract and Robert de Mal-

let, who had diſtinguiſhed themſelves among Robert's adherents. William de Warrenne was the next victim. Even William earl of Cornwall, ſon of the earl of Mortaigne, the king's uncle, having given matter of ſuſpicion againſt him, loſt all the vaſt acquiſitions of his family in England. Though the uſual violence and tyranny of the Norman barons afforded a plauſible pretence for thoſe proſecutions, and it is probable that none of the ſentences pronounced againſt theſe noblemen was wholly iniquitous, men eaſily ſaw, or conjectured, that the chief part of their guilt was not the injuſtice or illegality of their conduct. Robert, enraged at the fate of his friends, imprudently ventured to come into England; and he remonſtrated with his brother, in ſevere terms, againſt this breach of treaty: but met with ſo bad a reception, that he began to apprehend danger to his own liberty, and was glad to purchaſe an eſcape by reſigning his penſion.

CONQUEST OF NORMANDY. 1106.

THE indiſcretion of Robert ſoon expoſed him to more fatal injuries. This prince, whoſe bravery and candour procured him reſpect while at a diſtance, had no ſooner attained the poſſeſſion of power and enjoyment of peace, than all the vigour of his mind relaxed; and he fell into contempt among thoſe who approached his perſon, or were ſubject to his authority. Alternately abandoned to diſſolute pleaſures and to womaniſh ſuperſtition, he was ſo remiſs, both in the care of his treaſure and the exerciſe of his government, that his ſervants pillaged his money with impunity, ſtole from him his very clothes, and proceeded thence to practiſe every ſpecies of extortion on his defenceleſs ſubjects. The barons, whom a ſevere adminiſtration alone could have reſtrained, gave reins to their unbounded rapine upon their vaſſals, and inveterate animoſities againſt each other; and all Normandy,

during the reign of this benign prince, was become a ſcene of violence and depredation. The Normans at laſt, obſerving the regular government which Henry, notwithſtanding his uſurped title, had been able to eſtabliſh in England, applied to him, that he might uſe his authority for the ſuppreſſion of theſe diſorders; and they thereby afforded him a pretence for interpoſing in the affairs of Normandy. Inſtead of employing his mediation to render his brother's government reſpectable, or to redreſs the grievances of the Normans, he was only attentive to ſupport his own partiſans, and to increaſe their number by every art of bribery, intrigue, and inſinuation. Having found, in a viſit which he made to that duchy, that the nobility were more diſpoſed to pay ſubmiſſion to him than to their legal ſovereign, he collected, by arbitrary extortions on England, a great army and treaſure, and returned next year to Normandy, in a ſituation to obtain, either by violence or corruption, the dominion of that province. He took Bayeux by ſtorm after an obſtinate ſiege; he made himſelf maſter of Caen by the voluntary ſubmiſſion of the inhabitants; but, being repulſed at Falaiſe, and obliged by the winter ſeaſon to raiſe the ſiege, he returned into England, after giving aſſurances to his adherents that he would perſevere in ſupporting and protecting them.

Next year he opened the campaign with the ſiege of Tenchebray; and it became evident, from his preparations and progreſs, that he intended to uſurp the entire poſſeſſion of Normandy. Robert was at laſt rouſed from his lethargy; and, being ſupported by the earl of Mortaigne and Robert de Beleſme, the king's inveterate enemies, he raiſed a conſiderable army, and approached his brother's camp, with a view of finiſhing, in one deciſive battle, the quarrel between them. He was now entered on that ſcene of action in which alone he was qualified to excel; and he ſo animated his troops by his example, that they

threw the Engliſh into diſorder, and had nearly obtained the victory;[p] when the flight of Beleſme ſpread a panic among the Normans, and occaſioned their total defeat. Henry, beſides doing great execution on the enemy, made near ten thouſand priſoners; among whom was duke Robert himſelf, and all the moſt conſiderable barons who adhered to his intereſts.[q] This victory was followed by the final reduction of Normandy. Rouen immediately ſubmitted to the conqueror. Falaiſe, after ſome negociation, opened its gates; and by this acquiſition, beſides rendering himſelf maſter of an important fortreſs, he got into his hands prince William, the only ſon of Robert. He aſſembled the ſtates of Normandy; and, having received the homage of all the vaſſals of the duchy, having ſettled the government, revoked his brother's donations, and diſmantled the caſtles lately built, he returned into England, and carried along with him the duke as priſoner. That unfortunate prince was detained in cuſtody during the remainder of his life, which was no leſs than twenty-eight years, and he died in the caſtle of Cardiff in Glamorganſhire; happy if, without loſing his liberty, he could have relinquiſhed that power which he was not qualified either to hold or exerciſe. Prince William was committed to the care of Helie de St. Saen, who had married Robert's natural daughter, and who, being a man of probity and honour beyond what was uſual in thoſe ages, executed the truſt with great affection and fidelity. Edgar Atheling, who had followed Robert in the expedition to Jeruſalem, and who had lived with him ever ſince in Normandy, was another illuſtrious priſoner taken in the battle of Tenchebray.[r] Henry gave him his liberty, and ſettled a ſmall penſion on him, with which he retired; and he lived to a good old age in England, totally neglected and forgotten. This prince was diſtinguiſhed by perſonal bravery: but nothing can be a ſtronger proof of his mean talents in every other reſpect, than that, not-

withſtanding he poſſeſſed the affections of the Engliſh, and enjoyed the only legal title to the throne, he was allowed, during the reigns of ſo many violent and jealous uſurpers, to live unmoleſted, and go to his grave in peace.

QUARREL WITH ANSELM RENEWED.

A LITTLE after Henry had completed the conqueſt of Normandy, and ſettled the government of that province, he finiſhed a controverſy, which had been long depending between him and the pope, with regard to the inveſtitures in eccleſiaſtical benefices; and, though he was here obliged to relinquiſh ſome of the ancient rights of the crown, he extricated himſelf from the difficulty on eaſier terms than moſt princes, who in that age were ſo unhappy as to be engaged in diſputes with the apoſtolic ſee. The king's ſituation, in the beginning of his reign, obliged him to pay great court to Anſelm. The advantages which he had reaped from the zealous friendſhip of that prelate had made him ſenſible how prone the minds of his people were to ſuperſtition, and what an aſcendant the eccleſiaſtics had been able to aſſume over them. He had ſeen, on the acceſſion of his brother Rufus, that, though the rights of primogeniture were then violated, and the inclinations of almoſt all the barons thwarted, yet the authority of Lanfranc the primate had prevailed over all other conſiderations. His own caſe, which was ſtill more unfavourable, afforded an inſtance in which the clergy had more evidently ſhewn their influence and authority. Theſe recent examples, while they made him cautious not to offend that powerful body, convinced him, at the ſame time, that it was extremely his intereſt to retain the former prerogative of the crown in filling offices of ſuch vaſt importance, and to check the eccleſiaſtics in that independence to which they viſibly aſpired. The choice

which his brother, in a fit of penitence, had made of Anſelm was ſo far unfortunate to the king's pretenſions, that this prelate was celebrated for his piety and zeal, and auſterity of manners; and, though his monkiſh devotion and narrow principles prognoſticated no great knowledge of the world or depth of policy, he was, on that very account, a more dangerous inſtrument in the hands of politicians, and retained a greater aſcendant over the bigoted populace. The prudence and temper of the king appear in nothing more conſpicuous than in the management of this delicate affair; where he was always ſenſible that it had become neceſſary for him to riſque his whole crown, in order to preſerve the moſt invaluable jewel of it.[s]

Anſelm had no ſooner returned from baniſhment than his refuſal to do homage to the king raiſed a diſpute, which Henry evaded at that critical juncture by promiſing to ſend a meſſenger, in order to compound the matter with Paſcal II. who then filled the papal throne. The meſſenger, as was probably foreſeen, returned with an abſolute refuſal of the king's 'demands; and that fortified by many reaſons, which were well qualified to operate on the underſtandings of men in thoſe ages. Paſcal quoted the ſcriptures, to prove that Chriſt was the door; and he thence inferred that all eccleſiaſtics muſt enter into the church through Chriſt alone, not through the civil magiſtrates, or any profane laymen.[t] 'It is monſtrous,' added the pontiff, 'that a ſon ſhould pretend to beget his father, or a man to create his God: prieſts are called gods in ſcripture, as being the vicars of God; and will you, by your abominable pretenſions to grant them their inveſtiture, aſſume the right of creating [x] them?'

But, how convincing ſoever theſe arguments, they could not perſuade Henry to reſign ſo important a prerogative; and perhaps, as he was poſſeſſed of great reflection and learning, he thought that the abſurdity of a man's creating his God, even

allowing prieſts to be gods, was not urged with the beſt grace by the Roman pontiff. But, as he deſired ſtill to avoid, at leaſt to delay, the coming to any dangerous extremity with the church, he perſuaded Anſelm that he ſhould be able, by farther negociation, to attain ſome compoſition with Paſcal; and for that purpoſe he diſpatched three biſhops to Rome, while Anſelm ſent two meſſengers of his own, to be more fully aſſured of the pope's intentions.[y] Paſcal wrote back letters equally poſitive and arrogant, both to the king and primate; urging to the former that, by aſſuming the right of inveſtitures, he committed a kind of ſpiritual adultery with the church, who was the ſpouſe of Chriſt, and who muſt not admit of ſuch a commerce with any other perſon;[z] and inſiſting with the latter that the pretenſion of kings to confer benefices was the ſource of all ſimony; a topic which had but too much foundation in thoſe ages.[a]

Henry had now no other expedient than to ſuppreſs the letter addreſſed to himſelf, and to perſuade the three biſhops to prevaricate, and aſſert, upon their epiſcopal faith, that Paſcal had aſſured them in private of his good intentions towards Henry, and of his reſolution not to reſent any future exertion of his prerogative in granting inveſtitures; though he himſelf ſcrupled to give this aſſurance under his hand, leſt other princes ſhould copy the example, and aſſume a like privilege.[b] Anſelm's two meſſengers, who were monks, affirmed to him that it was impoſſible this ſtory could have any foundation: but their word was not deemed equal to that of three biſhops; and the king, as if he had finally gained his cauſe, proceeded to fill the ſees of Hereford and Saliſbury, and to inveſt the new biſhops in the uſual manner.[c] But Anſelm, who, as he had good reaſon, gave no credit to the aſſeveration of the king's meſſengers, refuſed not only to conſecrate them, but even to communicate with them; and the biſhops themſelves, finding how odious they were

become, returned to Henry the enſigns of their dignity. The quarrel every day increaſed between the king and the primate. The former, notwithſtanding the prudence and moderation of his temper, threw out menaces againſt ſuch as ſhould pretend to oppoſe him in exerting the ancient prerogatives of his crown: and Anſelm, ſenſible of his own dangerous ſituation, deſired leave to make a journey to Rome, in order to lay the caſe before the ſovereign pontiff. Henry, well pleaſed to rid himſelf without violence of ſo inflexible an antagoniſt, readily granted him permiſſion. The prelate was attended to the ſhore by infinite multitudes, not only of monks and clergymen, but people of all ranks; who ſcrupled not in this manner to declare for their primate againſt their ſovereign, and who regarded his departure as the final abolition of religion and true piety in the [d] kingdom. The king, however, ſeized all the revenues of his ſee; and ſent William de Warelwaſt to negociate with Paſcal, and to find ſome means of accommodation in this delicate affair.

The Engliſh miniſter told Paſcal that his maſter would rather loſe his crown than part with the right of granting inveſtitures: 'And I,' replied Paſcal, 'would rather loſe my head than allow him [e] to retain it.' Henry ſecretly prohibited Anſelm from returning, unleſs he reſolved to conform himſelf to the laws and uſages of the kingdom; and the primate took up his reſidence at Lyons, in expectation that the king would at laſt be obliged to yield the point which was the preſent object of controverſy between them. Soon after he was permitted to return to his monaſtery at Bec in Normandy; and Henry, beſides reſtoring to him the revenues of his ſee, treated him with the greateſt reſpect, and held ſeveral conferences with him, in order to ſoften his oppoſition, and bend him to ſubmiſſion.[f] The people of England, who thought all differences now accommodated, were inclined to blame their primate for abſenting himſelf ſo long

from his charge; and he daily received letters from his partiſans, repreſenting the neceſſity of his ſpeedy return. The total extinction, they told him, of religion and Chriſtianity was likely to enſue from the want of his fatherly care; the moſt ſhocking cuſtoms prevail in England; and, the dread of his ſeverity being now removed, ſodomy, and the practice of wearing long hair, gain ground among all ranks of men; and theſe enormities openly appear every where, without ſenſe of ſhame or fear of puniſhment.[5]

The policy of the court of Rome has commonly been much admired; and men, judging by ſucceſs, have beſtowed the higheſt eulogies on that prudence by which a power, from ſuch ſlender beginnings, could advance, without force of arms, to eſtabliſh an univerſal and almoſt abſolute monarchy in Europe. But the wiſdom of ſo long a ſucceſſion of men who filled the papal throne, and who were of ſuch different ages, tempers, and intereſts, is not intelligible, and could never have place in nature. The inſtrument, indeed, with which they wrought, the ignorance and ſuperſtition of the people, is ſo groſs an engine, of ſuch univerſal prevalence, and ſo little liable to accident or diſorder, that it may be ſucceſsful even in the moſt unſkilful hands; and ſcarce any indiſcretion can fruſtrate its operations. While the court of Rome was openly abandoned to the moſt flagrant diſorders, even while it was torn with ſchiſms and factions, the power of the church daily made a ſenſible progreſs in Europe; and the temerity of Gregory and caution of Paſcal were equally fortunate in promoting it. The clergy, feeling the neceſſity which they lay under of being protected againſt the violence of princes, or rigour of the laws, were well pleaſed to adhere to a foreign head; who, being removed from the fear of the civil authority, could freely employ the power of the whole church in defending her ancient or uſurped properties and privileges,

when invaded in any particular country. The monks, deſirous of an independence on their dioceſans, profeſſed a ſtill more devoted attachment to the triple crown; and the ſtupid people poſſeſſed no ſcience or reaſon which they could oppoſe to the moſt exorbitant pretenſions. Nonſenſe paſſed for demonſtration; the moſt criminal means were ſanctified by the piety of the end; treaties were not ſuppoſed to be binding, where the intereſts of God were concerned; the ancient laws and cuſtoms of ſtates had no authority againſt a divine right; impudent forgeries were received as authentic monuments of antiquity; and the champions of holy church, if ſucceſsful, were celebrated as heroes, if unfortunate, were worſhipped as martyrs; and all events thus turned out equally to the advantage of clerical uſurpations. Paſcal himſelf, the reigning pope, was, in the courſe of this very controverſy concerning inveſtitures, involved in circumſtances, and neceſſitated to follow a conduct, which would have drawn diſgrace and ruin on any temporal prince that had been ſo unfortunate as to fall into a like ſituation. His perſon was ſeized by the emperor Henry V. and he was obliged, by a formal treaty, to reſign to that monarch the right of granting inveſtitures, for which they had ſo long contended.[h] In order to add greater ſolemnity to this agreement, the emperor and pope communicated together on the ſame hoſt; one half of which was given to the prince, the other taken by the pontiff. The moſt tremendous imprecations were publicly denounced on either of them who ſhould violate the treaty: yet no ſooner did Paſcal recover his liberty than he revoked all his conceſſions, and pronounced the ſentence of excommunication againſt the emperor; who, in the end, was obliged to ſubmit to the terms required of him, and to yield up all his pretenſions, which he never could reſume.[i]

The king of England had very near fallen into the ſame dangerous ſituation. Paſcal had already excommunicated the earl

of Mellent, and the other miniſters of Henry, who were inſtrumental in ſupporting his pretenſions:[k] he daily menaced the king himſelf with a like ſentence; and he ſuſpended the blow only to give him leiſure to prevent it by a timely ſubmiſſion. The malcontents waited impatiently for the opportunity of diſturbing his government by conſpiracies and inſurrections;[l] the king's beſt friends were anxious at the proſpect of an incident which would ſet their religious and civil duties at variance; and the counteſs of Blois, his ſiſter, a princeſs of piety, who had great influence over him, was affrightened with the danger of her brother's eternal damnation.[m] Henry, on the other hand, ſeemed determined to run all hazards, rather than reſign a prerogative of ſuch importance, which had been enjoyed by all his predeceſſors; and it ſeemed probable, from his great prudence and abilities, that he might be able to ſuſtain his rights, and finally prevail in the conteſt. While Paſcal and Henry thus ſtood mutually in awe of each other it was the more eaſy to bring about an accommodation between them, and to find a medium in which they might agree.

COMPROMISE WITH ANSELM. 1107.

Before biſhops took poſſeſſion of their dignities, they had formerly been accuſtomed to paſs through two ceremonies: they received from the hands of the ſovereign a ring and croſier, as ſymbols of their office; and this was called their 'inveſtiture:' they alſo made thoſe ſubmiſſions to the prince which were required of vaſſals by the rites of the feudal law, and which received the name of 'homage.' And, as the king might refuſe both to grant the inveſtiture and to receive the homage, though the chapter had, by ſome canons of the middle age, been endowed with the right of election, the ſovereign had in reality

the ſole power of appointing prelates. Urban II. had equally deprived laymen of the rights of granting inveſtiture and of receiving homage.[n] The emperors never were able, by all their wars and negociations, to make any diſtinction be admitted between them: the interpoſition of profane laymen, in any particular, was ſtill repreſented as impious and abominable: and the church openly aſpired to a total independence on the ſtate. But Henry had put England as well as Normandy in ſuch a ſituation as gave greater weight to his negociations: and Paſcal was for the preſent ſatisfied with his reſigning the right of granting inveſtitures, by which the ſpiritual dignity was ſuppoſed to be conferred; and he allowed the biſhops to do homage for their temporal properties and privileges.[o] The pontiff was well pleaſed to have made this acquiſition, which he hoped would in time involve the whole: and the king, anxious to procure an eſcape from a very dangerous ſituation, was content to retain ſome, though a more precarious, authority in the election of prelates.

After the principal controverſy was accommodated, it was not difficult to adjuſt the other differences. The pope allowed Anſelm to communicate with the prelates who had already received inveſtitures from the crown; and he only required of them ſome ſubmiſſions for their paſt miſconduct.[p] He alſo granted Anſelm a plenary power of remedying every other diſorder which, he ſaid, might ariſe from the barbarouſneſs of the country.[q] Such was the idea which the popes then entertained of the Engliſh; and nothing can be a ſtronger proof of the miſerable ignorance in which that people were then plunged, than that a man who ſat on the papal throne, and who ſubſiſted by abſurdities and nonſenſe, ſhould think himſelf entitled to treat them as barbarians.

During the courſe of theſe controverſies a ſynod was held at Weſtminſter; where the king, intent only on the main diſpute,

allowed ſome canons of leſs importance to be enacted, which tended to promote the uſurpations of the clergy. The celibacy of prieſts was enjoined; a point which it was ſtill found very difficult to carry into execution: and even laymen were not allowed to marry within the ſeventh degree of affinity.[r] By this contrivance the pope augmented the profits which he reaped from granting diſpenſations; and likewiſe thoſe from divorces: for, as the art of writing was then rare, and pariſh regiſters were not regularly kept, it was not eaſy to aſcertain the degrees of affinity even among people of rank; and any man, who had money ſufficient to pay for it, might obtain a divorce, on pretence that his wife was more nearly related to him than was permitted by the canons. The ſynod alſo paſſed a vote, prohibiting the laity from wearing long hair.[s] The averſion of the clergy to this mode was not confined to England. When the king went to Normandy, before he had conquered that province, the biſhop of Seez, in a formal harangue, earneſtly exhorted him to redreſs the manifold diſorders under which the government laboured, and to oblige the people to poll their hair in a decent form. Henry, though he would not reſign his prerogatives to the church, willingly parted with his hair; he cut it in the form which they required of him, and obliged all the courtiers to imitate his example.[t]

WARS ABROAD.

THE acquiſition of Normandy was a great point of Henry's ambition; being the ancient patrimony of his family, and the only territory which, while in his poſſeſſion, gave him any weight or conſideration on the continent. But the injuſtice of his uſurpation was the ſource of great inquietude; involved him in frequent wars; and obliged him to impoſe on his Engliſh ſubjects

thoſe many heavy and arbitrary taxes, of which all the hiſtorians of that age unanimouſly complain.[u] His nephew William was but ſix years of age when he committed him to the care of Helie de St. Saen; and it is probable that his reaſon, for intruſting that important charge to a man of ſo unblemiſhed a character, was to prevent all malignant ſuſpicions, in caſe any accident ſhould befal the life of the young prince. He ſoon repented of his choice; but, when he deſired to recover poſſeſſion of William's perſon, Helie withdrew his pupil, and carried him to the court of Fulk, count of Anjou, who gave him protection.[x] In proportion as the prince grew up to man's eſtate he diſcovered virtues becoming his birth; and, wandering through different courts of Europe, he excited the friendly compaſſion of many princes, and raiſed a general indignation againſt his uncle, who had ſo unjuſtly bereaved him of his inheritance. Lewis the Groſs, ſon of Philip, was at this time king of France; a brave and generous prince; who, having been obliged, during the lifetime of his father, to fly into England, in order to eſcape the perſecutions of his ſtep-mother Bertrude, had been protected by Henry, and had thence conceived a perſonal friendſhip for him. But theſe ties were ſoon diſſolved after the acceſſion of Lewis, who found his intereſts to be in ſo many particulars oppoſite to thoſe of the Engliſh monarch, and who became ſenſible of the danger attending the annexation of Normandy to England. He joined, therefore, the counts of Anjou and Flanders in giving diſquiet to Henry's government; and this monarch, in order to defend his foreign dominions, found himſelf obliged to go over to Normandy, where he reſided two years. The war which enſued among thoſe princes was attended with no memorable event, and produced only ſlight ſkirmiſhes on the frontiers; agreeably to the weak condition of the ſovereigns in that age, whenever their ſubjects were not rouſed by ſome great and

urgent occaſion. Henry, by contracting his eldeſt ſon William to the daughter of Fulk, detached that prince from the alliance, and obliged the others to come to an accommodation with him. This peace was not of long duration. His nephew William retired to the court of Baldwin, earl of Flanders, who eſpouſed his cauſe; and the king of France, having ſoon after, for other reaſons, joined the party, a new war was kindled in Normandy, which produced no event more memorable than had attended the former. At laſt the death of Baldwin, who was ſlain in an action near Eu, gave ſome reſpite to Henry, and enabled him to carry on war with more advantage againſt his enemies.

Lewis, finding himſelf unable to wreſt Normandy from the king by force of arms, had recourſe to the dangerous expedient of applying to the ſpiritual power, and of affording the eccleſiaſtics a pretence to interpoſe in the temporal concerns of princes. He carried young William to a general council, which was aſſembled at Rheims by pope Calixtus II. preſented the Norman prince to them; complained of the manifeſt uſurpation and injuſtice of Henry; craved the aſſiſtance of the church for reinſtating the true heir in his dominions; and repreſented the enormity of detaining in captivity ſo brave a prince as Robert, one of the moſt eminent champions of the croſs, and who, by that very quality, was placed under the immediate protection of the holy ſee. Henry knew how to defend the rights of his crown with vigour, and yet with dexterity. He had ſent over the Engliſh biſhops to this ſynod; but at the ſame time had warned them that, if any farther claims were ſtarted by the pope or the eccleſiaſtics, he was determined to adhere to the laws and cuſtoms of England, and maintain the prerogatives tranſmitted to him by his predeceſſors. 'Go,' ſaid he to them, 'ſalute the pope in my name; hear his apoſtolical precepts; but take care to bring none of his new inventions into my kingdom.' Finding, however,

that it would be eaſier for him to elude than oppoſe the efforts of Calixtus, he gave his ambaſſadors orders to gain the pope and his favourites by liberal preſents and promiſes. The complaints of the Norman prince were thenceforth heard with great coldneſs by the council; and Calixtus confeſſed, after a conference which he had the ſame ſummer with Henry, and when that prince probably renewed his preſents, that, of all men whom he had ever yet been acquainted with, he was beyond compariſon the moſt eloquent and perſuaſive.

The warlike meaſures of Lewis proved as ineffectual as his intrigues. He had laid a ſcheme for ſurpriſing Noyon; but Henry, having received intelligence of the deſign, marched to the relief of the place, and ſuddenly attacked the French at Brenneville, as they were advancing towards it. A ſharp conflict enſued; where prince William behaved with great bravery, and the king himſelf was in the moſt imminent danger. He was wounded in the head by Criſpin, a gallant Norman officer, who had followed the fortunes of William;[y] but, being rather animated than terrified by the blow, he immediately beat his antagoniſt to the ground, and ſo encouraged his troops by the example, that they put the French to total rout, and had very nearly taken their king priſoner. The dignity of the perſons engaged in this ſkirmiſh rendered it the moſt memorable action of the war; for in other reſpects it was not of great importance. There were nine hundred horſemen who fought on both ſides, yet were there only two perſons ſlain; the reſt were defended by that heavy armour worn by the cavalry in thoſe times.[z] An accommodation ſoon after enſued between the kings of France and England, and the intereſts of young William were entirely neglected in it.

DEATH OF PRINCE WILLIAM, SON OF HENRY I.

DEATH OF PRINCE WILLIAM. 1120.

But this public proſperity of Henry was much overbalanced by a domeſtic calamity which befel him. His only ſon William had now reached his eighteenth year; and the king, from the facility with which he himſelf had uſurped the crown, dreading that a like revolution might ſubvert his family, had taken care to have him recogniſed ſucceſſor by the ſtates of the kingdom, and had carried him over to Normandy, that he might receive the homage of the barons of that duchy. The king, on his return, ſet ſail from Barfleur, and was ſoon carried by a fair wind out of ſight of land. The prince was detained by ſome accident; and his ſailors, as well as their captain Thomas Fitz-Stephens, having ſpent the interval in drinking, were ſo fluſtered, that, being in a hurry to follow the king, they heedleſsly carried the ſhip on a rock, where ſhe immediately foundered. William was put into the long boat, and had got clear of the ſhip; when, hearing the cries of his natural ſiſter the counteſs of Perche, he ordered the ſeamen to row back, in hopes of ſaving her: but the numbers who then crowded in ſoon ſunk the boat, and the prince with all his retinue periſhed. Above a hundred and forty young noblemen of the principal families of England and Normandy were loſt on this occaſion. A butcher of Rouen was the only perſon on board who eſcaped;[a] he clung to the maſt, and was taken up next morning by fiſhermen. Fitz-Stephens alſo took hold of the maſt; but, being informed by the butcher that prince William had periſhed, he ſaid that he would not ſurvive the diſaſter; and he threw himſelf headlong into the ſea.[b] Henry entertained hopes for three days that his ſon had put into ſome diſtant port of England: but when certain intelligence of the calamity was brought him he fainted away; and it was remarked

that he never after was ſeen to ſmile, nor ever recovered his wonted cheerfulneſs.[c]

The death of William may be regarded in one reſpect as a misfortune to the Engliſh; becauſe it was the immediate ſource of thoſe civil wars which, after the demiſe of the king, cauſed ſuch confuſion in the kingdom: but it is remarkable that the young prince had entertained a violent averſion to the natives; and had been heard to threaten that, when he ſhould be king, he would make them draw the plough, and would turn them into beaſts of burden. Theſe prepoſſeſſions he inherited from his father, who, though he was wont, when it might ſerve his purpoſe, to value himſelf on his birth, as a native [d] of England, ſhewed, in the courſe of his government, an extreme prejudice againſt that people. All hopes of preferment, to eccleſiaſtical as well as civil dignities, were denied them during this whole reign; and any foreigner, however ignorant or worthleſs, was ſure to have the preference in every competition.[e] As the Engliſh had given no diſturbance to the government during the courſe of fifty years, this inveterate antipathy, in a prince of ſo much temper as well as penetration, forms a preſumption that the Engliſh of that age were ſtill a rude and barbarous people, even compared to the Normans, and impreſſes us with no very favourable idea of the Anglo Saxon manners.

KING'S SECOND MARRIAGE. 1121.

Prince William left no children; and the king had not now any legitimate iſſue; except one daughter, Matilda, whom in 1110 he had betrothed, though only eight years of age,[f] to the emperor Henry V. and whom he had then ſent over to be educated in Germany.[g] But, as her abſence from the kingdom, and her marriage into a foreign family, might endanger the ſucceſſion, Henry,

who was now a widower, was induced to marry, in hopes of having male heirs; and he made his addreſſes to Adelais, daughter of Godfrey duke of Lovaine, and niece of pope Calixtus, a young princeſs of an amiable perſon.[h] But Adelais brought him no children; and the prince, who was moſt likely to diſpute the ſucceſſion, and even the immediate poſſeſſion, of the crown, recovered hopes of ſubverting his rival, who had ſucceſſively ſeized all his patrimonial dominions. William, the ſon of duke Robert, was ſtill protected in the French court; and, as Henry's connexions with the count of Anjou were broken off by the death of his ſon, Fulk joined the party of the unfortunate prince, gave him his daughter in marriage, and aided him in raiſing diſturbances in Normandy. But Henry found the means of drawing off the count of Anjou, by forming anew with him a nearer connexion than the former, and one more material to the intereſts of that count's family. The emperor, his ſon-in-law, dying without iſſue, he beſtowed his daughter on Geoffrey, the eldeſt ſon of Fulk; and endeavoured to enſure her ſucceſſion by having her recogniſed heir to all his dominions, and obliging the barons both of Normandy and England to ſwear fealty to her. He hoped that the choice of this huſband would be more agreeable to all his ſubjects than that of the emperor; as ſecuring them from the danger of falling under the dominion of a great and diſtant potentate, who might bring them into ſubjection, and reduce their country to the rank of a province. But the barons were diſpleaſed that a ſtep ſo material to national intereſts had been taken without conſulting them;[i] and Henry had too ſenſibly experienced the turbulence of their diſpoſition, not to dread the effects of their reſentment. It ſeemed probable that his nephew's party might gain force from the increaſe of the malcontents. An acceſſion of power, which that prince acquired a little after, tended to render his pretenſions ſtill more dangerous.

Charles earl of Flanders being aſſaſſinated during the celebration of divine ſervice, king Lewis immediately put the young prince in poſſeſſion of that county, to which he had pretenſions in the right of his grandmother Matilda, wife to the Conqueror. But William ſurvived a very little time this piece of good fortune, which ſeemed to open the way to ſtill farther proſperity. He was killed in a ſkirmiſh with the landgrave of Alſace, his competitor for Flanders; and his death put an end, for the preſent, to the jealouſy and inquietude of Henry.

The chief merit of this monarch's government conſiſts in the profound tranquillity which he eſtabliſhed and maintained throughout all his dominions during the greater part of his reign. The mutinous barons were retained in ſubjection; and his neighbours, in every attempt which they made upon him, found him ſo well prepared, that they were diſcouraged from continuing or renewing their enterpriſes. In order to repreſs the incurſions of the Welſh, he brought over ſome Flemings in the year 1111, and ſettled them in Pembrokeſhire, where they long maintained a different language, and cuſtoms, and manners, from their neighbours. Though his government ſeems to have been arbitrary in England, it was judicious and prudent; and was as little oppreſſive as the neceſſity of his affairs would permit. He wanted not attention to the redreſs of grievances; and hiſtorians mention in particular the levying of purveyance, which he endeavoured to moderate and reſtrain. The tenants in the king's demeſne lands were at that time obliged to ſupply, gratis, the court with proviſions, and to furniſh carriages on the ſame hard terms, when the king made a progreſs, as he did frequently, into any of the counties. Theſe exactions were ſo grievous, and levied in ſo licentious a manner, that the farmers, when they heard of the approach of the court, often deſerted their houſes, as if an enemy had invaded the country,[k] and ſheltered their

perſons and families in the woods from the inſults of the king's retinue. Henry prohibited thoſe enormities, and puniſhed the perſons guilty of them by cutting off their hands, legs, or other members.[l] But the prerogative was perpetual; the remedy applied by Henry was temporary; and the violence itſelf of this remedy, ſo far from giving ſecurity to the people, was only a proof of the ferocity of the government, and threatened a quick return of like abuſes.

One great and difficult object of the king's prudence was the guarding againſt the encroachments of the court of Rome, and protecting the liberties of the church of England. The pope, in the year 1101, had ſent Guy, archbiſhop of Vienne, as legate into Britain; and, though he was the firſt that for many years had appeared there in that character, and his commiſſion gave general ſurpriſe,[m] the king, who was then in the commencement of his reign, and was involved in many difficulties, was obliged to ſubmit to this encroachment on his authority. But, in the year 1116, Anſelm abbot of St. Sabas, who was coming over with a like legantine commiſſion, was prohibited from entering the kingdom;[n] and pope Calixtus, who in his turn was then labouring under many difficulties, by reaſon of the pretenſions of Gregory, an antipope, was obliged to promiſe that he never would for the future, except when ſolicited by the king himſelf, ſend any legate into England.[o] Notwithſtanding this engagement, the pope, as ſoon as he had ſuppreſſed his antagoniſt, granted the cardinal de Crema a legantine commiſſion over that kingdom; and the king, who, by reaſon of his nephew's intrigues and invaſions, found himſelf at that time in a dangerous ſituation, was obliged to ſubmit to the exerciſe of this commiſſion.[p] A ſynod was called by the legate at London; where, among other canons, a vote paſſed, enacting ſevere penalties on the marriages of the clergy.[q] The cardinal, in a public harangue, declared it to be an

unpardonable enormity that a prieſt ſhould dare to conſecrate and touch the body of Chriſt immediately after he had riſen from the ſide of a ſtrumpet; for that was the decent appellation which he gave to the wives of the clergy. But it happened that the very next night the officers of juſtice, breaking into a diſorderly houſe, found the cardinal in bed with a courtezan;[r] an incident which threw ſuch ridicule upon him that he immediately ſtole out of the kingdom. The ſynod broke up; and the canons againſt the marriage of clergymen were worſe executed than ever.[s]

Henry, in order to prevent this alternate revolution of conceſſions and encroachments, ſent William, then archbiſhop of Canterbury, to remonſtrate with the court of Rome againſt thoſe abuſes, and to aſſert the liberties of the Engliſh church. It was a uſual maxim with every pope, when he found that he could not prevail in any pretenſion, to grant princes or ſtates a power which they had always exerciſed; to reſume at a proper juncture the claim which ſeemed to be reſigned, and to pretend that the civil magiſtrate had poſſeſſed the authority only from a ſpecial indulgence of the Roman pontiff. After this manner the pope, finding that the French nation would not admit his claim of granting inveſtitures, had paſſed a bull, giving the king that authority; and he now practiſed a like invention to elude the complaints of the king of England. He made the archbiſhop of Canterbury his legate; renewed his commiſſion from time to time; and ſtill pretended that the rights, which that prelate had ever exerciſed as metropolitan, were entirely derived from the indulgence of the apoſtolic ſee. The Engliſh princes, and Henry in particular, who were glad to avoid any immediate conteſt of ſo dangerous a nature, commonly acquieſced by their ſilence in theſe pretenſions of the court of Rome.[t]

DEATH AND CHARACTER OF HENRY. 1135.

As every thing in England remained in tranquillity, Henry took the opportunity (in 1131) of paying a viſit to Normandy, to which he was invited, as well by his affection for that country, as by his tenderneſs for his daughter the empreſs Matilda, who was always his favourite. Some time after that princeſs was delivered of a ſon, who received the name of Henry; and the king, farther to enſure her ſucceſſion, made all the nobility of England and Normandy renew the oath of fealty, which they had already ſworn to her.[u] The joy of this event, and the ſatisfaction which he reaped from his daughter's company, who bore ſucceſſively two other ſons, made his reſidence in Normandy very agreeable to him;[x] and he ſeemed determined to paſs the remainder of his days in that country; when an incurſion of the Welſh obliged him to think of returning into England. He was preparing for the journey, but was ſeized with a ſudden illneſs at St. Dennis le Forment, from eating too plentifully of lampreys, a food which always agreed better with his palate than his conſtitution.[y] He died in the ſixty-ſeventh year of his age, and the thirty-fifth of his reign; leaving by will his daughter Matilda heir of all his dominions, without making any mention of her huſband Geoffrey, who had given him ſeveral cauſes of diſpleaſure.[z]

This prince was one of the moſt accompliſhed that has filled the Engliſh throne; and poſſeſſed all the great qualities both of body and mind, natural and acquired, which could fit him for the high ſtation to which he attained. His perſon was manly, his countenance engaging, his eyes clear, ſerene, and penetrating. The affability of his addreſs encouraged thoſe who might be overawed by the ſenſe of his dignity or of his wiſdom; and,

though he often indulged his facetious humour, he knew how to temper it with diſcretion, and ever kept at a diſtance from all indecent familiarities with his courtiers. His ſuperior eloquence and judgment would have given him an aſcendant, even had he been born in a private ſtation; and his perſonal bravery would have procured him reſpect, though it had been leſs ſupported by art and policy. By his great progreſs in literature he acquired the name of Beau-clerc, or the ſcholar: but his application to thoſe ſedentary purſuits abated nothing of the activity and vigilance of his government; and, though the learning of that age was better fitted to corrupt than improve the underſtanding, his natural good ſenſe preſerved itſelf untainted, both from the pedantry and ſuperſtition which were then ſo prevalent among men of letters. His temper was ſuſceptible of the ſentiments as well of friendſhip as of reſentment;[a] and his ambition, though high, might be deemed moderate and reaſonable, had not his conduct towards his brother and nephew ſhewed that he was too much diſpoſed to ſacrifice to it all the maxims of juſtice and equity. But the total incapacity of Robert for government afforded his younger brother a reaſon or pretence for ſeizing the ſceptre both of England and Normandy; and, when violence and uſurpation are once begun, neceſſity obliges a prince to continue in the ſame criminal courſe, and engages him in meaſures which his better judgment and ſounder principles would otherwiſe have induced him to reject with warmth and indignation.

King Henry was much addicted to women; and hiſtorians mention no leſs than ſeven illegitimate ſons and ſix daughters born to him.[b] Hunting was alſo one of his favourite amuſements; and he exerciſed great rigour againſt thoſe who encroached on the royal foreſts, which were augmented during his reign,[c] though their number and extent were already too great.

To kill a ſtag was as criminal as to murder a man. He made all the dogs be mutilated which were kept on the borders of his foreſts; and he ſometimes deprived his ſubjects of the liberty of hunting on their own lands, or even cutting their own woods. In other reſpects he executed juſtice, and that with rigour; the beſt maxim which a prince in that age could follow. Stealing was firſt made capital in this reign.[d] Falſe coining, which was then a very common crime, and by which the money had been extremely debaſed, was ſeverely puniſhed by Henry.[e] Near fifty criminals of this kind were at one time hanged or mutilated; and, though theſe puniſhments ſeem to have been exerciſed in a manner ſomewhat arbitrary, they were grateful to the people, more attentive to preſent advantages than jealous of general laws. There is a code which paſſes under the name of Henry I. but the beſt antiquaries have agreed to think it ſpurious: it is, however, a very ancient compilation, and may be uſeful to inſtruct us in the manners and cuſtoms of the times. We learn from it that a great diſtinction was then made between the Engliſh and Normans, much to the advantage of the latter.[f] The deadly feuds, and the liberty of private revenge, which had been avowed by the Saxon laws, were ſtill continued, and were not yet wholly illegal.[g]

Among the laws granted on the king's acceſſion, it is remarkable that the reunion of the civil and eccleſiaſtical courts, as in the Saxon times, was enacted.[h] But this law, like the articles of his charter, remained without effect, probably from the oppoſition of archbiſhop Anſelm.

Henry, on his acceſſion, granted a charter to London, which ſeems to have been the firſt ſtep towards rendering that city a corporation. By this charter the city was empowered to keep the farm of Middleſex at three hundred pounds a year, to elect its own ſheriff and juſticiary, and to hold pleas of the crown;

and it was exempted from ſcot, Danegelt, trials by combat, and lodging the king's retinue. Theſe, with a confirmation of the privileges of their court of huſtings, wardmotes, and common halls, and their liberty of hunting in Middleſex and Surrey, are the chief articles of this charter.[i]

It is ſaid [k] that this prince, from indulgence to his tenants, changed the rents of his demeſnes, which were formerly paid in kind, into money, which was more eaſily remitted to the exchequer. But the great ſcarcity of coin would render that commutation difficult to be executed, while at the ſame time proviſions could not be ſent to a diſtant quarter of the kingdom. This affords a probable reaſon why the ancient kings of England ſo frequently changed their place of abode; they carried their court from one place to another, that they might conſume upon the ſpot the revenue of their ſeveral demeſnes.

CHAP. VII.

STEPHEN.

ACCESSION OF STEPHEN: WAR WITH SCOTLAND: INSURRECTION IN FAVOR OF MATILDA: STEPHEN TAKEN PRISONER: MATILDA CROWNED: STEPHEN RELEASED: RESTORED TO THE CROWN: CONTINUATION OF THE CIVIL WARS: COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE KING & PRINCE HENRY: DEATH OF THE KING.

Fittler sc.

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A. Smith sculp.

CHAPTER VII.

STEPHEN.

1135....1154.

ACCESSION OF STEPHEN....WAR WITH SCOTLAND....INSURRECTION IN FAVOUR OF MATILDA....STEPHEN TAKEN PRISONER....MATILDA CROWNED....STEPHEN RELEASED....CIVIL WARS CONTINUED....COMPROMISE WITH PRINCE HENRY....DEATH OF THE KING.

In the progreſs and ſettlement of the feudal law, the male ſucceſſion to fiefs had taken place ſome time before the female was admitted; and eſtates, being conſidered as military benefices, not as property, were tranſmitted to ſuch only as could ſerve in the armies, and perform in perſon the conditions upon which they were originally granted. But, when the continuance of rights, during ſome generations, in the ſame family, had, in a great meaſure, obliterated the primitive idea, the females were gradually admitted to the poſſeſſion of feudal property; and the ſame revolution of principles, which procured them the inheritance of private eſtates, naturally introduced their ſucceſſion to government and authority. The failure, therefore, of male heirs to the kingdom of England and duchy of Normandy, ſeemed to leave the ſucceſſion open, without a rival, to the empreſs Matilda;

and, as Henry had made all his vaſſals in both ſtates ſwear fealty to her, he preſumed that they would not eaſily be induced to depart at once from her hereditary right, and from their own reiterated oaths and engagements. But the irregular manner in which he himſelf had acquired the crown might have inſtructed him, that neither his Norman nor Engliſh ſubjects were as yet capable of adhering to a ſtrict rule of government; and, as every precedent of this kind ſeems to give authority to new uſurpations, he had reaſon to dread, even from his own family, ſome invaſion of his daughter's title, which he had taken ſuch pains to eſtabliſh.

Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror, had been married to Stephen count of Blois, and had brought him ſeveral ſons; among whom Stephen and Henry, the two youngeſt, had been invited over to England by the late king, and had received great honours, riches, and preferment, from the zealous friendſhip which that prince bore to every one that had been ſo fortunate as to acquire his favour and good opinion. Henry, who had betaken himſelf to the eccleſiaſtical profeſſion, was created abbot of Glaſtenbury and biſhop of Wincheſter; and, though theſe dignities were conſiderable, Stephen had, from his uncle's liberality, attained eſtabliſhments ſtill more ſolid and durable.[1] The king had married him to Matilda, who was daughter and heir of Euſtace count of Boulogne, and who brought him, beſides that feudal ſovereignty in France, an immenſe property in England, which in the diſtribution of lands had been conferred by the Conqueror on the family of Boulogne. Stephen alſo by this marriage acquired a new connexion with the royal family of England; as Mary, his wife's mother, was ſiſter to David the reigning king of Scotland, and to Matilda the firſt wife of Henry, and mother of the empreſs. The king, ſtill imagining that he ſtrengthened the intereſts of his family by the aggrandizement

of Stephen, took pleaſure in enriching him by the grant of new poſſeſſions; and he conferred on him the great eſtate forfeited by Robert Mallet in England, and that forfeited by the earl of Mortaigne in Normandy. Stephen, in return, profeſſed great attachment to his uncle; and appeared ſo zealous for the ſucceſſion of Matilda, that, when the barons ſwore fealty to that princeſs, he contended with Robert earl of Gloceſter, the king's natural ſon, who ſhould firſt be admitted to give her this teſtimony of devoted zeal and fidelity.[m] Meanwhile he continued to cultivate, by every art of popularity, the friendſhip of the Engliſh nation; and many virtues, with which he ſeemed to be endowed, favoured the ſucceſs of his intentions. By his bravery, activity, and vigour, he acquired the eſteem of the barons; by his generoſity, and by an affable and familiar addreſs, unuſual in that age among men of his high quality, he obtained the affections of the people, particularly of the Londoners;[n] and, though he dared not to take any ſteps towards his farther grandeur, leſt he ſhould expoſe himſelf to the jealouſy of ſo penetrating a prince as Henry, he ſtill hoped that, by accumulating riches and power, and by acquiring popularity, he might in time be able to open his way to the throne.

ACCESSION OF STEPHEN. 1135.

No ſooner had Henry breathed his laſt than Stephen, inſenſible to all the ties of gratitude and fidelity, and blind to danger, gave full reins to his criminal ambition; and truſted that, even without any previous intrigue, the celerity of his enterpriſe, and the boldneſs of his attempt, might overcome the weak attachment which the Engliſh and Normans in that age bore to the laws and to the rights of their ſovereign. He haſtened over to England; and, though the citizens of Dover, and thoſe of Can-

terbury, appriſed of his purpoſe, ſhut their gates againſt him, he ſtopped not till he arrived at London, where ſome of the lower rank, inſtigated by his emiſſaries, as well as moved by his general popularity, immediately ſaluted him king. His next point was to acquire the good-will of the clergy; and, by performing the ceremony of his coronation, to put himſelf in poſſeſſion of the throne, from which he was confident it would not be eaſy afterwards to expel him. His brother, the biſhop of Wincheſter, was uſeful to him in theſe capital articles. Having gained Roger biſhop of Saliſbury; who, though he owed a great fortune and advancement to the favour of the late king, preſerved no ſenſe of gratitude to that prince's family; he applied, in conjunction with that prelate, to William archbiſhop of Canterbury, and required him, in virtue of his office, to give the royal unction to Stephen. The primate, who, as all the others, had ſworn fealty to Matilda, refuſed to perform this ceremony; but his oppoſition was overcome by an expedient equally diſhonourable with the other ſteps by which this revolution was effected. Hugh Bigod, ſteward of the houſehold, made oath before the primate that the late king on his death bed had ſhewn a diſſatisfaction with his daughter Matilda, and had expreſſed his intention of leaving the count of Boulogne heir to all his dominions.[o] William, either believing, or feigning to believe, Bigod's teſtimony, anointed Stephen, and put the crown upon his head; and from this religious ceremony that prince, without any ſhadow either of hereditary title or conſent of the nobility or people, was allowed to proceed to the exerciſe of ſovereign authority. Very few barons attended his coronation;[p] but none oppoſed his uſurpation, however unjuſt or flagrant. The ſentiment of religion, which, if corrupted into ſuperſtition, has often little efficacy in fortifying the duties of civil ſociety, was not affected by the multiplied oaths taken in favour of Matilda, and only rendered the people

obedient to a prince who was countenanced by the clergy, and who had received from the primate the rite of royal unction and conſecration.[q]

Stephen, that he might farther ſecure his tottering throne, paſſed a charter, in which he made liberal promiſes to all orders of men; to the clergy, that he would ſpeedily fill all vacant benefices, and would never levy the rents of any of them during the vacancy; to the nobility, that he would reduce the royal foreſts to their ancient boundaries, and correct all encroachments; and to the people, that he would remit the tax of Danegelt, and reſtore the laws of king Edward.[r] The late king had a great treaſure at Wincheſter, amounting to a hundred thouſand pounds; and Stephen, by ſeizing this money, immediately turned againſt Henry's family the precaution which that prince had employed for their grandeur and ſecurity: an event which naturally attends the policy of amaſſing treaſures. By means of this money the uſurper enſured the compliance, though not the attachment, of the principal clergy and nobility; but, not truſting to this frail ſecurity, he invited over from the continent, particularly from Brittany and Flanders, great numbers of thoſe bravoes, or diſorderly ſoldiers, with whom every country in Europe, by reaſon of the general ill police and turbulent government, extremely abounded.[s] Theſe mercenary troops guarded his throne by the terrors of the ſword; and Stephen, that he might alſo overawe all malcontents by new and additional terrors of religion, procured a bull from Rome, which ratified his title, and which the pope, ſeeing this prince in poſſeſſion of the throne, and pleaſed with an appeal to his authority in ſecular controverſies, very readily granted him.[t]

Matilda and her huſband Geoffrey were as unfortunate in Normandy as they had been in England. The Norman nobility, moved by an hereditary animoſity againſt the Angevins, firſt ap-

plied to Theobald count of Blois, Stephen's elder brother, for protection and aſſiſtance; but, hearing afterwards that Stephen had got poſſeſſion of the Engliſh crown, and having many of them the ſame reaſons as formerly for deſiring a continuance of their union with that kingdom, they transferred their allegiance to Stephen, and put him in poſſeſſion of their government. Lewis the younger, the reigning king of France, accepted the homage of Euſtace, Stephen's eldeſt ſon, for the duchy; and, the more to corroborate his connexions with that family, he betrothed his ſiſter Conſtantia to the young prince. The count of Blois reſigned all his pretenſions, and received in lieu of them an annual penſion of two thouſand marks; and Geoffrey himſelf was obliged to conclude a truce for two years with Stephen, on condition of the king's paying him, during that time, a penſion of five thouſand.[u] Stephen, who had taken a journey to Normandy, finiſhed all theſe tranſactions in perſon, and ſoon after returned to England.

Robert earl of Gloceſter, natural ſon of the late king, was a man of honour and abilities; and, as he was much attached to the intereſts of his ſiſter Matilda, and zealous for the lineal ſucceſſion, it was chiefly from his intrigues and reſiſtance that the king had reaſon to dread a new revolution of government. This nobleman, who was in Normandy when he received intelligence of Stephen's acceſſion, found himſelf much embarraſſed concerning the meaſures which he ſhould purſue in that difficult emergency. To ſwear allegiance to the uſurper appeared to him diſhonourable, and a breach of his oath to Matilda; to refuſe giving this pledge of his fidelity was to baniſh himſelf from England, and be totally incapacitated from ſerving the royal family, or contributing to their reſtoration.[x] He offered Stephen to do him homage, and to take the oath of fealty; but with an expreſs condition that the king ſhould maintain all his ſtipula-

tions, and ſhould never invade any of Robert's rights or dignities: and Stephen, though ſenſible that this reſerve, ſo unuſual in itſelf, and ſo unbefitting the duty of a ſubject, was meant only to afford Robert a pretence for a revolt on the firſt favourable opportunity, was obliged, by the numerous friends and retainers of that nobleman, to receive him on thoſe terms.[y] The clergy, who could ſcarcely at this time be deemed ſubjects to the crown, imitated that dangerous example: they annexed to their oaths of allegiance this condition, that they were only bound ſo long as the king defended the eccleſiaſtical liberties, and ſupported the diſcipline of the church.[z] The barons, in return for their ſubmiſſion, exacted terms ſtill more deſtructive of public peace, as well as of royal authority: many of them required the right of fortifying their caſtles, and of putting themſelves in a poſture of defence; and the king found himſelf totally unable to refuſe his conſent to this exorbitant demand.[a] All England was immediately filled with thoſe fortreſſes, which the noblemen garriſoned either with their vaſſals, or with licentious ſoldiers, who flocked to them from all quarters. Unbounded rapine was exerciſed upon the people for the maintenance of theſe troops; and private animoſities, which had with difficulty been reſtrained by law, now breaking out without control, rendered England a ſcene of uninterrupted violence and devaſtation. Wars between the nobles were carried on with the utmoſt fury in every quarter; the barons even aſſumed the right of coining money, and of exerciſing, without appeal, every act of juriſdiction;[b] and the inferior gentry, as well as the people, finding no defence from the laws during this total diſſolution of ſovereign authority, were obliged, for their immediate ſafety, to pay court to ſome neighbouring chieftain, and to purchaſe his protection, both by ſubmitting to his exactions and by aſſiſting him in his rapine upon others. The erection of one caſtle proved the im-

mediate cauſe of building many others; and even thoſe who obtained not the king's permiſſion thought that they were entitled, by the great principle of ſelf-preſervation, to put themſelves on an equal footing with their neighbours, who commonly were alſo their enemies and rivals. The ariſtocratical power, which is uſually ſo oppreſſive in the feudal governments, had now riſen to its utmoſt height during the reign of a prince who, though endowed with vigour and abilities, had uſurped the throne without the pretence of a title, and who was neceſſitated to tolerate in others the ſame violence to which he himſelf had been beholden for his ſovereignty.

WAR WITH SCOTLAND. 1138.

But Stephen was not of a diſpoſition to ſubmit long to theſe uſurpations, without making ſome effort for the recovery of royal authority. Finding that the legal prerogatives of the crown were reſiſted and abridged, he was alſo tempted to make his power the ſole meaſure of his conduct; and to violate all thoſe conceſſions which he himſelf had made on his acceſſion,[c] as well as the ancient privileges of his ſubjects. The mercenary ſoldiers, who chiefly ſupported his authority, having exhauſted the royal treaſure, ſubſiſted by depredations; and every place was filled with the beſt grounded complaints againſt the government. The earl of Gloceſter, having now ſettled with his friends the plan of an inſurrection, retired beyond ſea, ſent the king a defiance, ſolemnly renounced his allegiance, and upbraided him with the breach of thoſe conditions which had been annexed to the oath of fealty ſworn by that nobleman.[d] David, king of Scotland, appeared at the head of an army in defence of his niece's title, and, penetrating into Yorkſhire, committed the moſt barbarous devaſtations on that country. The fury of his maſſacres and

ravages enraged the northern nobility, who might otherwiſe have been inclined to join him; and William earl of Albemarle, Robert de Ferrers, William Piercy, Robert de Brus, Roger Moubray, Ilbert Lacey, Walter l'Eſpec, powerful barons in thoſe parts, aſſembled an army, with which they encamped at North Allerton, and awaited the arrival of the enemy. A great battle was here fought, called 'the battle of the Standard,' from a high crucifix erected by the Engliſh on a waggon, and carried along with the army as a military enſign. The king of Scots was defeated; and he himſelf, as well as his ſon Henry, narrowly eſcaped falling into the hands of the Engliſh. This ſucceſs overawed the malcontents in England, and might have given ſome ſtability to Stephen's throne, had he not been ſo elated with proſperity as to engage in a controverſy with the clergy, who were at that time an overmatch for any monarch.

Though the great power of the church in ancient times weakened the authority of the crown, and interrupted the courſe of the laws, it may be doubted whether, in ages of ſuch violence and outrage, it was not rather advantageous that ſome limits were ſet to the power of the ſword, both in the hands of the prince and nobles; and that men were taught to pay regard to ſome principles and privileges. The chief misfortune was, that the prelates on ſome occaſions acted entirely as barons, employed military power againſt their ſovereign or their neighbours, and thereby often increaſed thoſe diſorders which it was their duty to repreſs. The biſhop of Saliſbury, in imitation of the nobility, had built two ſtrong caſtles; one at Sherborne, another at the Devizes; and had laid the foundations of a third at Malmeſbury. His nephew Alexander, biſhop of Lincoln, had erected a fortreſs at Newark. And Stephen, who was now ſenſible from experience of the miſchiefs attending theſe multiplied citadels, reſolved to begin with deſtroying thoſe of the clergy,

who by their function ſeemed leſs entitled than the barons to ſuch military ſecurities.[e] Making pretence of a fray which had ariſen in court between the retinue of the biſhop of Saliſbury and that of the earl of Brittany, he ſeized both that prelate and the biſhop of Lincoln, threw them into priſon, and obliged them by menaces to deliver up thoſe places of ſtrength which they had lately erected.[f]

Henry biſhop of Wincheſter, the king's brother, being armed with a legantine commiſſion, now conceived himſelf to be an eccleſiaſtical ſovereign no leſs powerful than the civil; and, forgetting the ties of blood which connected him with the king, he reſolved to vindicate the clerical privileges, which he pretended were here openly violated. He aſſembled a ſynod at Weſtminſter, and there complained of the impiety of Stephen's meaſures; who had employed violence againſt the dignitaries of the church, and had not awaited the ſentence of a ſpiritual court, by which alone, he affirmed, they could lawfully be tried and condemned, if their conduct had anywiſe merited cenſure or puniſhment.[g] The ſynod ventured to ſend a ſummons to the king, charging him to appear before them, and to juſtify his meaſures;[h] and Stephen, inſtead of reſenting this indignity, ſent Aubrey de Vere to plead his cauſe before that aſſembly. De Vere accuſed the two prelates of treaſon and ſedition; but the ſynod refuſed to try the cauſe, or examine their conduct, till thoſe caſtles, of which they had been diſpoſſeſſed, were previouſly reſtored to them.[i] The biſhop of Saliſbury declared that he would appeal to the pope; and, had not Stephen and his partiſans employed menaces, and even ſhewn a diſpoſition of executing violence by the hands of the ſoldiery, affairs had inſtantly come to extremity between the crown and the mitre.[k]

INSURRECTION IN FAVOUR OF MATILDA. 1139.

WHILE this quarrel, joined to ſo many other grievances, increaſed the diſcontents among the people, the empreſs, invited by the opportunity, and ſecretly encouraged by the legate himſelf, landed in England, with Robert earl of Gloceſter, and a retinue of a hundred and forty knights. She fixed her reſidence at Arundel caſtle, whoſe gates were opened to her by Adelais the queen dowager, now married to William de Albini earl of Suſſex; and ſhe excited by meſſengers her partiſans to take arms in every county of England. Adelais, who had expected that her daughter-in-law would have invaded the kingdom with a much greater force, became apprehenſive of danger; and Matilda, to eaſe her of her fears, removed firſt to Briſtol, which belonged to her brother Robert, thence to Gloceſter, where ſhe remained under the protection of Milo, a gallant nobleman in thoſe parts, who had embraced her cauſe. Soon after Geoffrey Talbot, William Mohun, Ralph Lovel, William Fitz-John, William Fitz-Alan, Paganell, and many other barons, declared for her; and her party, which was generally favoured in the kingdom, ſeemed every day to gain ground upon that of her antagoniſt.

Were we to relate all the military events tranſmitted to us by contemporary and authentic hiſtorians, it would be eaſy to ſwell our accounts of this reign into a large volume: but thoſe incidents, ſo little memorable in themſelves, and ſo confuſed both in time and place, could afford neither inſtruction nor entertainment to the reader. It ſuffices to ſay that the war was ſpread into every quarter; and that thoſe turbulent barons, who had already ſhaken off, in a great meaſure, the reſtraint of government, having now obtained the pretence of a public cauſe,

carried on their devaſtations with redoubled fury, exerciſed implacable vengeance on each other, and ſet no bounds to their oppreſſions over the people. The caſtles of the nobility were become receptacles of licenſed robbers; who, ſallying forth day and night, committed ſpoil on the open country, on the villages, and even on the cities; put the captives to torture, in order to make them reveal their treaſures; ſold their perſons to ſlavery; and ſet fire to their houſes, after they had pillaged them of every thing valuable. The fierceneſs of their diſpoſition, leading them to commit wanton deſtruction, fruſtrated their rapacity of its purpoſe; and the poverty and perſons even of the eccleſiaſtics, generally ſo much revered, were at laſt, from neceſſity, expoſed to the ſame outrage which had laid waſte the reſt of the kingdom. The land was left untilled; the inſtruments of huſbandry were deſtroyed or abandoned; and a grievous famine, the natural reſult of thoſe diſorders, affected equally both parties, and reduced the ſpoilers, as well as the defenceleſs people, to the moſt extreme want and indigence.[1]

STEPHEN TAKEN PRISONER. 1141.

After ſeveral fruitleſs negociations and treaties of peace, which never interrupted theſe deſtructive hoſtilities, there happened at laſt an event, which ſeemed to promiſe ſome end of the public calamities. Ralph earl of Cheſter, and his half-brother William de Roumara, partiſans of Matilda, had ſurpriſed the caſtle of Lincoln; but the citizens, who were better affected to Stephen, having invited him to their aid, that prince laid cloſe ſiege to the caſtle, in hopes of ſoon rendering himſelf maſter of the place, either by aſſault or by famine. The earl of Gloceſter haſtened with an army to the relief of his friends; and Stephen, informed of his approach, took the field with a reſolution of giving him

battle. After a violent ſhock, the two wings of the royaliſts were put to flight; and Stephen himſelf, ſurrounded by the enemy, was at laſt, after exerting great efforts of valour, borne down by numbers, and taken priſoner. He was conducted to Gloceſter; and, though at firſt treated with humanity, was ſoon after, on ſome ſuſpicion, thrown into priſon, and loaded with irons.

Stephen's party was entirely broken by the captivity of their leader; and the barons came in daily from all quarters, and did homage to Matilda. The princeſs, however, amidſt all her proſperity, knew that ſhe was not ſecure of ſucceſs unleſs ſhe could gain the confidence of the clergy; and, as the conduct of the legate had been of late very ambiguous, and ſhewed his intentions to have rather aimed at humbling his brother than totally ruining him, ſhe employed every endeavour to fix him in her intereſts. She held a conference with him in an open plain near Wincheſter; where ſhe promiſed, upon oath, that, if he would acknowledge her for ſovereign, would recogniſe her title as the ſole deſcendant of the late king, and would again ſubmit to the allegiance which he, as well as the reſt of the kingdom, had ſworn to her, he ſhould in return be entire maſter of the adminiſtration, and in particular ſhould, at his pleaſure, diſpoſe of all vacant biſhoprics and abbies. Earl Robert her brother, Brian Fitz-Count, Milo of Gloceſter, and other great men, became guarantees for her obſerving theſe engagements;[m] and the prelate was at laſt induced to promiſe her allegiance, but that ſtill burdened with the expreſs condition that ſhe ſhould on her part fulfil her promiſes. He then conducted her to Wincheſter, led her in proceſſion to the cathedral, and with great ſolemnity, in the preſence of many biſhops and abbots, denounced curſes againſt all thoſe who curſed her, poured out bleſſings on thoſe who bleſſed her, granted abſolution to ſuch as were obedient to her, and excommunicated ſuch as were rebellious.[n] Theobald

archbiſhop of Canterbury ſoon after came alſo to court, and ſwore allegiance to the empreſs.°

MATILDA CROWNED.

MATILDA, that ſhe might farther enſure the attachment of the clergy, was willing to receive the crown from their hands; and, inſtead of aſſembling the ſtates of the kingdom, (the meaſure which the conſtitution, had it been either fixed or regarded, ſeemed neceſſarily to require) ſhe was content that the legate ſhould ſummon an eccleſiaſtical ſynod, and that her title to the throne ſhould there be acknowledged. The legate, addreſſing himſelf to the aſſembly, told them that, in the abſence of the empreſs, Stephen his brother had been permitted to reign, and, previouſly to his aſcending the throne, had ſeduced them by many fair promiſes of honouring and exalting the church, of maintaining the laws, and of reforming all abuſes: that it grieved him to obſerve how much that prince had in every particular been wanting to his engagements; public peace was interrupted, crimes were daily committed with impunity, biſhops were thrown into priſon and forced to ſurrender their poſſeſſions, abbies were put to ſale, churches were pillaged, and the moſt enormous diſorders prevailed in the adminiſtration: that he himſelf, in order to procure a redreſs of theſe grievances, had formerly ſummoned the king before a council of biſhops; but, inſtead of inducing him to amend his conduct, had rather offended him by that expedient: that, how much ſoever miſguided, that prince was ſtill his brother, and the object of his affections; but his intereſts, however, muſt be regarded as ſubordinate to thoſe of their heavenly Father, who had now rejected him, and thrown him into the hands of his enemies: that it principally belonged to the clergy to elect and ordain kings; he had ſummoned them

together for that purpoſe; and, having invoked the divine aſſiſtance, he now pronounced Matilda, the only deſcendant of Henry their late ſovereign, queen of England. The whole aſſembly, by their acclamations or ſilence, gave, or ſeemed to give, their aſſent to this declaration.[p]

The only laymen ſummoned to this council, which decided the fate of the crown, were the Londoners; and even theſe were required not to give their opinion, but to ſubmit to the decrees of the ſynod. The deputies of London, however, were not ſo paſſive: they inſiſted that their king ſhould be delivered from priſon; but were told by the legate that it became not the Londoners, who were regarded as noblemen in England, to take part with thoſe barons who had baſely forſaken their lord in battle, and who had treated holy church with contumely.[q] It is with reaſon that the citizens of London aſſumed ſo much authority, if it be true, what is related by Fitz-Stephen, a contemporary author, that that city could at this time bring into the field no leſs than eighty thouſand combatants.[r]

London, notwithſtanding its great power, and its attachment to Stephen, was at length obliged to ſubmit to Matilda; and her authority, by the prudent conduct of earl Robert, ſeemed to be eſtabliſhed over the whole kingdom. But affairs remained not long in this ſituation. That princeſs, beſides the diſadvantages of her ſex, which weakened her influence over a turbulent and martial people, was of a paſſionate, imperious ſpirit, and knew not how to temper with affability the harſhneſs of a refuſal. Stephen's queen, ſeconded by many of the nobility, petitioned for the liberty of her huſband; and offered that, on this condition, he ſhould renounce the crown, and retire into a convent. The legate deſired that prince Euſtace, his nephew, might inherit Boulogne and the other patrimonial eſtates of his father. The Londoners applied for the eſtabliſhment of king Edward's

laws, inſtead of thoſe of king Henry, which, they ſaid, were grievous and oppreſſive.' All theſe petitions were rejected in the moſt haughty and peremptory manner.

STEPHEN RELEASED.

THE legate, who had probably never been ſincere in his compliance with Matilda's government, availed himſelf of the ill humour excited by this imperious conduct, and ſecretly inſtigated the Londoners to a revolt. A conſpiracy was entered into to ſeize the perſon of the empreſs; and ſhe ſaved herſelf from the danger by a precipitate retreat. She fled to Oxford: ſoon after ſhe went to Wincheſter; whither the legate, deſirous to ſave appearances, and watching the opportunity to ruin her cauſe, had retired. But, having aſſembled all his retainers, he openly joined his force to that of the Londoners, and to Stephen's mercenary troops, who had not yet evacuated the kingdom; and he beſieged Matilda in Wincheſter. The princeſs, being hard preſſed by famine, made her eſcape; but in the flight earl Robert, her brother, fell into the hands of the enemy. This nobleman, though a ſubject, was as much the life and ſoul of his own party as Stephen was of the other; and the empreſs, ſenſible of his merit and importance, conſented to exchange the priſoners on equal terms. The civil war was again kindled with greater fury than ever.

CIVIL WARS CONTINUED. 1142.

EARL Robert, finding the ſucceſſes on both ſides nearly balanced, went over to Normandy, which, during Stephen's captivity, had ſubmitted to the earl of Anjou; and he perſuaded Geoffrey to allow his eldeſt ſon Henry, a young prince of great hopes, to

take a journey into England, and appear at the head of his partiſans. This expedient, however, produced nothing deciſive. Stephen took Oxford after a long ſiege; he was defeated by earl Robert at Wilton; and the empreſs, though of a maſculine ſpirit, yet being haraſſed with a variety of good and bad fortune, and alarmed with continual dangers to her perſon and family, at laſt retired into Normandy, whither ſhe had ſent her ſon ſome time before. The death of her brother, which happened nearly about the ſame time, would have proved fatal to her intereſts, had not ſome incidents occurred which checked the courſe of Stephen's proſperity. This prince, finding that the caſtles built by the noblemen of his own party encouraged the ſpirit of independence, and were little leſs dangerous than thoſe which remained in the hands of the enemy, endeavoured to extort from them a ſurrender of thoſe fortreſſes; and he alienated the affections of many of them by this equitable demand. The artillery alſo of the church, which his brother had brought over to his ſide, had, after ſome interval, joined the other party. Eugenius III. had mounted the papal throne; the biſhop of Wincheſter was deprived of the legantine commiſſion, which was conferred on Theobald archbiſhop of Canterbury, the enemy and rival of the former legate. That pontiff alſo, having ſummoned a general council at Rheims in Champagne, inſtead of allowing the church of England, as had been uſual, to elect its own deputies, nominated five Engliſh biſhops to repreſent that church, and required their attendance in the council. Stephen, who, notwithſtanding his preſent difficulties, was jealous of the rights of his crown, refuſed them permiſſion to attend;[u] and the pope, ſenſible of his advantage in contending with a prince who reigned by a diſputed title, took revenge by laying all Stephen's party under an interdict.[x] The diſcontents of the royaliſts, at being thrown into this ſituation, were augmented by a compariſon with Matilda's

party, who enjoyed all the benefits of the ſacred ordinances; and Stephen was at laſt obliged, by making proper ſubmiſſions to the ſee of Rome, to remove the reproach from his party.[y]

The weakneſs of both ſides, rather than any decreaſe of mutual animoſity, having produced a tacit ceſſation of arms in England, many of the nobility, Roger de Moubray, William de Warrenne, and others, finding no opportunity to exert their military ardour at home, inliſted themſelves in a new cruſade, which with ſurpriſing ſucceſs, after former diſappointments and misfortunes, was now preached by St. Bernard.[z] But an event ſoon after happened which threatened a revival of hoſtilities in England. Prince Henry, who had reached his ſixteenth year, was deſirous of receiving the honour of knighthood; a ceremony which every gentleman in that age paſſed through before he was admitted to the uſe of arms, and which was even deemed requiſite for the greateſt princes. He intended to receive his admiſſion from his great-uncle, David king of Scotland; and for that purpoſe he paſſed through England with a great retinue, and was attended by the moſt conſiderable of his partiſans. He remained ſome time with the king of Scotland; made incurſions into England; and by his dexterity and vigour in all manly exerciſes, by his valour in war, and his prudent conduct in every occurrence, he rouſed the hopes of his party, and gave ſymptoms of thoſe great qualities which he afterwards diſplayed when he mounted the throne of England. Soon after his return to Normandy he was, by Matilda's conſent, inveſted in that duchy; and upon the death of his father Geoffrey, which happened in the ſubſequent year, he took poſſeſſion both of Anjou and Maine, and concluded a marriage which brought him a great acceſſion of power, and rendered him extremely formidable to his rival. Eleanor, the daughter and heir of William duke of Guienne and earl of Poictou, had been married ſixteen years to Lewis VII.

king of France, and had attended him in a cruſade which that monarch conducted againſt the infidels; but, having there loſt the affections of her huſband, and even fallen under ſome ſuſpicion of gallantry with a handſome Saracen, Lewis, more delicate than polite, procured a divorce from her, and reſtored her thoſe rich provinces which by her marriage ſhe had annexed to the crown of France. Young Henry, neither diſcouraged by the inequality of years, nor by the reports of Eleanor's gallantries, made ſucceſsful courtſhip to that princeſs, and, eſpouſing her ſix weeks after her divorce, got poſſeſſion of all her dominions as her dowry. The luſtre which he received from this acquiſition, and the proſpect of his riſing fortune, had ſuch an effect in England, that, when Stephen, deſirous to enſure the crown to his ſon Euſtace, required the archbiſhop of Canterbury to anoint that prince as his ſucceſſor, the primate refuſed compliance, and made his eſcape beyond ſea, to avoid the violence and reſentment of Stephen.

COMPROMISE WITH PRINCE HENRY. 1153.

Henry, informed of theſe diſpoſitions in the people, made an invaſion on England. Having gained ſome advantage over Stephen at Malmeſbury, and having taken that place, he proceeded thence to throw ſuccours into Wallingford, which the king had advanced with a ſuperior army to beſiege. A deciſive action was every day expected; when the great men of both ſides, terrified at the proſpect of farther bloodſhed and confuſion, interpoſed with their good offices, and ſet on foot a negociation between the rival princes. The death of Euſtace, during the courſe of the treaty, facilitated its concluſion. An accommodation was ſettled, by which it was agreed that Stephen ſhould poſſeſs the crown during his lifetime; that juſtice ſhould be adminiſtered

in his name, even in the provinces which had ſubmitted to Henry; and that this latter prince ſhould, on Stephen's demiſe, ſucceed to the kingdom, and William, Stephen's ſon, to Boulogne and his patrimonial eſtate.

DEATH OF THE KING. 1154.

After all the barons had ſworn to the obſervance of this treaty, and done homage to Henry as to the heir of the crown, that prince evacuated the kingdom; and the death of Stephen, which happened the next year after a ſhort illneſs, prevented all thoſe quarrels and jealouſies which were likely to have enſued in ſo delicate a ſituation.

England ſuffered great miſeries during the reign of this prince: but his perſonal character, allowing for the temerity and injuſtice of his uſurpation, appears not liable to any great exception; and he ſeems to have been well qualified, had he ſucceeded by a juſt title, to have promoted the happineſs and proſperity of his ſubjects.[a] He was poſſeſſed of induſtry, activity, and courage, to a great degree; though not endowed with a ſound judgment, he was not deficient in abilities; he had the talent of gaining men's affections; and, notwithſtanding his precarious ſituation, he never indulged himſelf in the exerciſe of any cruelty or revenge.[b] His advancement to the throne procured him neither tranquillity nor happineſs; and, though the ſituation of England prevented the neighbouring ſtates from taking any durable advantage of her confuſions, her inteſtine diſorders were to the laſt degree ruinous and deſtructive. The court of Rome was alſo permitted, during thoſe civil wars, to make farther advances in her uſurpations; and appeals to the pope, which had always been ſtrictly prohibited by the Engliſh laws, became now common in every eccleſiaſtical controverſy.[c]

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